

A CRITICAL STUDY OF LOCKE'S ACCOUNT OF PERSONAL IDENTITY

especially in relation to his Theories of Perception and Memory, in "An Essay Concerning Humane Understanding", and of some contemporary and later criticisms of it.

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B I B L I O G R A P H Y.

(NOTE: this list is confined to works actually used in preparation of the text of the present thesis.)

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I.

I N T R O D U C T I O N .

i.

1. The excuse for this study is a belief that the account given, or implied, of the Self or Personal Identity in any piece of systematic thinking, is crucial in evaluating it.
2. This question i.e. "What is Self, or The Self?", appears to me to be the one question which cannot be left "open" while the investigator proceeds with some other topic which might be alleged to be not related to the status of the investigator himself.
3. Logical enquiries are frequently taken to be, par excellence, topics which are thus unrelated to the



status of the logician. This appears to me to be a mistaken view, since a logical activity which proceeds without establishing the status of the logician, makes as a presupposition, either ultimate or provisional, one (i.e. of a Self -- the logician's own) which may not legitimately be accepted as ultimate since the presupposition itself is of, or contains, a concept (i.e. such a self with at least the relative continuity implied by the grammatical structure of the language he uses) which is, to some degree at least, amenable to further "logical" analysis through the application to the successive states contained in it of the Law of Identity -- as by, for example, Hume.

4. On the other hand, such a presupposition cannot be accepted as provisional<sup>1</sup>, because, even if the attempt is made to assert that, whether there is a Self or Subject that knows it or not, the proposition "A is A"

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<sup>1</sup> It might be maintained that from the point of view held by R.G. Collingwood, whose terms I have borrowed here, any question asked about the "nature of the Self", would be, strictly, a "nonsense question". It would be, that is to say, from his point of view, a piece of "pseudo metaphysics", since the question purports to elicit a propositionally formulated answer concerning the Self as included in the "realm of Pure Being" (i.e. since it is an "ontological" question, it would be, for Collingwood, a "nonsense question"). From this point of view, I take it, the only real question that could be asked

is true -- even if the proposition, or what it expresses, is never a datum to any subject whatever -- then that attempt evidently in itself involves the use of the concept of a specific sort of Self either, positively, when it is that to which a proposition or what it expresses is a datum and is that which has, therefore, sufficient continuity to "hold together" the terms of the proposition in their relation, when it "is known", or, negatively, when it is the correlative concept (antithetical or limiting) which must be (is) used when the proposition or what it expresses is spoken of (or thought of) as being not a datum to any subject i.e. when it is spoken of (or thought of) as "not known"<sup>1</sup>.

5. This is to say that it is impossible to assert

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concerning the Self would be one which was intended to elicit as an answer the formulation of a relative ("provisional") presupposition underlying a purely psychological account of the Self, and this would be allowed as a legitimate piece of "metaphysical analysis". However, I wish to make it clear that I am using Collingwood's terms only as an expository aid and my usage does not imply an acceptance of his dismissal of the possibility of an Ontology.

<sup>1</sup> Likewise, such a concept is inescapably used when there purports to be reference from something known "to" (in any sense) something which is not known or which is "unknowable".

the proposition "A is A" as unqualified by the condition of some subject making or knowing the proposition.

Therefore the philosopher has the prior task of establishing the nature of these conditions i.e. of the Self, before he can legitimately regard his propositions as categorical.

6. In other words, whereas the logician may not, on the one hand, leave the nature of his own subjectivity, or agency in logical process, as "provisional" (i.e. ontologically unspecified), because the conceptual and linguistic apparatus he uses requires, as above, the presupposition of a Self of specific nature -- specific in so far as it implies continuance within the limits of e.g. one act of inferring -- and thereby asserts that such a presupposition is not "provisional" while, at the same time, the proposition of the existence of such a self is not self-evident, although it is allowed, apparently, to be prior to other propositions (e.g. "A is A") admitted as self-evident; on the other hand, he cannot make his own continuing subjectivity an "ultimate" presupposition, because it contains a concept

of some degree of complexity, and that complexity can be analysed by the application of more primitive (though not, apparently, prior) concepts such as that of identity -- such identity, for example as that of the "remembered" and "remembering" selves of successive states of a process of inference<sup>1</sup>, or, possibly, as of the concrete identity of what may be in abstraction discriminable within an instantaneous cognition -- for example an instance of "self consciousness"; and even if it is maintained that the sort of identity asserted of two or more successive states of the self S. at time  $t_i$ . and time  $t_{ii}$ , i.e. the identity of  $si.$  and  $sii.$  is not the sort of identity asserted in "A is A", the application of this latter, more primitive but apparently posterior concept is required to know  $si.$  and  $sii.$  as self-identical or self-existent i.e. to know that  $si.$  is  $si.$  and  $sii.$  is  $sii.$ , which is a condition of the "presupposed" identity of  $si.$  and  $sii.$  in S. (See below, para. 12).

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Butler, "Analogy: Dissertation I, para.11" in Gladstone's edition.

7. This is, it must be emphasised, not to assert the identity of Logic with the psychology of the logician (See below, para.13), but it is to assert that the attribution of "logical validity" has the pre-requirement of a definitive statement of the ontological status of the logician -- "logician" being used to indicate whoever it is that conceptualises a situation or, to beg fewer of the questions at issue, whatever is the focus, so to speak, of any situation conceptualised.

8. If it is urged that the apprehension of the necessity of the proposition "A is A" is, as a matter of psychological fact, instantaneous and non-durational i.e. that "A is A" is merely the literary extension of what is, experientially, A-as-it-is-now, presented in a cognitive state which is without internal succession or other diversity, so that the problem does not arise, it must be pointed out that if this were so, any continuity of consciousness would be impossible; for if the apprehension of the self-identity of a thing is so confined to an unextended moment, then the identity of



the content of every moment of consciousness with itself is apprehended in this manner, so that, the content of every moment being apprehended in isolation from that of any other, consciousness could not extend over even two such successive moments whose contents might be what would ordinarily be called "identical". Therefore, since we are here enquiring into matter of psychological fact, we must conclude that since we do have continued consciousness, the apprehension of what is expressed in the proposition "A is A", is not as suggested in the objection; and the problem remains.

9. There is, however, another side to the problem viz. that however much it may be the case that the propositions about the nature of the Self presupposed by logical terminology -- and, indeed, by any language -- are not self-evident, it is, nevertheless, the case that the existence of "self" is in some sort immediately and necessarily known.

10. It is admitted that there are, at least, conscious states -- which is not a matter of "doubt" or question.

The Pyrrhonist does not attempt to deny primordial consciousness; it may, indeed, be in any or every sense illusory and unconnected, but, as such, it is. This is the admitted frontier of scepticism. Likewise it is not disputed that some, if not all, such states occur under the qualification "as being known by" or "as presented to" a Subject, That the Subject to which they refer is illusory, and the qualification of reference itself illusion, might be the case; that does not remove or alter the qualification as constitutive in the consciousness.

11. We appear, then, to have this double problem: that whatever the nature of any primordial conscious state may be -- and the denial that there are primordial conscious states, or that there is a primordial conscious state, is admitted on all hands to be unmeaning -- in or throughout such a state there is an awareness of "self", but, while this is so, that every attempt to describe, define, analyse, or in any way communicate about that state involves the use of a terminology which contains as a structural necessity and principle of use, a concept of

Self in a first sense (as at least the presumed continuant giving coherence to one act of inferring or one recognition of e.g. Identity), which is not the Self in a second sense (i.e. of immediate awareness) whose existence is at all indubitable or necessary, even although such a conceptualised self, i.e. "self" in the first sense, is made the precondition of alleged "necessary" propositions.

12. We might put the matter thus:- that cognitive state which is the recognition of the necessity of the proposition "A is A" can in principle be analysed (because it has temporal extension - see above para.8) into the series of conscious states  $si.....sn$ . These states would be, for example, the apprehension of each term (the "terms" being A-now,....&....A-"now", however brief the interval), of both terms, of their relatedness etc. So that as presented,  $si. \text{ is } si., \quad sii. \text{ is } sii.,..... sn. \text{ is } sn.$ , but the proposition " $si. - sn. \text{ is }$  the identical self S." (i.e. that which "holds together" the terms of the original proposition in that relation which is their "identity") is not of the same sort as "A is A" or, more importantly, as " $si. \text{ is } si.$ " even although it would seem that it must be a necessary proposition if the identity

of the terms of the proposition which expresses the content of the cognitive state, or of the constitutive conscious states with themselves, is to be "identity" or necessary.

13. The point might then be made that there is some confusion here between a "psychological" and a "logical" use of "identity". But this is not so. The series  $si. - sn.$  is, we have remarked, as presented, " $si.$  is  $si.$ ,  $sii.$  is  $sii.$  .....  $sn.$  is  $sn.$ " and that which is propounded in these propositions is of the same status as that which is propounded in the original proposition with the apprehension of whose necessity they are involved, and if the apprehension of the original proposition is to have sufficient unity for it to be an apprehension of "identity", then the relation of the constitutive series " $si. - sn.$ ") and the apprehending Self which it constitutes, must be proponible in a form of the same sort as that of the original proposition, and this does not appear to be possible. That the series  $si. - sn.$  may, as a succession, constitute from another point of view a "psychological fact" in the "history" of some self, may be the case, but it is

irrelevant. This may be to assert an equivalence, at least, between Psychology so called, and Logic; but it is not from this point of view a confusion.

14. On the other hand, if we were to regard the resolution of the given cognitive state into the series  $si. - sn.$  as an "abstracting" process whereby we came merely to regard the elements of the series as "concrete particulars", then the assertion of the identity of their sum as "concrete particulars" with a "concrete universal" i.e. the self  $S.$ , might remove the difficulty. I wish, however, to reserve this point, since we shall be concerned chiefly with the difficulties which arise from what is generally regarded as an "atomistic" account.<sup>1</sup>

15. If, now, we look at the matter from another point of view, viz. from that of those wishing to pursue ethical

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<sup>1</sup> Such an "atomistic" account would be regarded from the point of view we are touching on here as an attempt to resolve the states of the Self, or the contents of a Self's experience, into a group of "abstract particulars" and as such it would be, from this point of view, at the best illusory, and negligible.



discussion, it appears evident to me that for the traditional accounts at least of what Ethics is, the establishment of the nature of the self is crucial.

16. In accepted parlance such terms as Obligation, Punishment, Motive, Disposition, Desert, etc., involve, on any analysis, the notion of a specifically continuant Self (as we shall see from Butler's and others' animadversions upon Locke), and the terms Good and Evil, in so far as Ethics requires their application in an inter-personal context, are subject to the same condition in use.<sup>1</sup>

17. For these, more recently enunciated, kinds of Ethics, which emphasise agency rather than cognition, the problem would seem to remain; for, although the exponents of this view may be less concerned with the nature of the epistemic subject, their own emphasis on the "personal" nature of morality suggests that for them

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<sup>1</sup> If it is admitted that the concept of the Self is of first relevance for Ethics, it will follow that it will be of relevance in those "Social sciences" which are, in general, derivatives of, or substitutes for, it.

"actions" or "instances of agency" cannot be series of discrete events (which are, indeed, maintained to be the antithesis of actions - E.g. Professor Macmurray's views) but that "agency" implies an identical and identifiable agent.<sup>1</sup> And with the continuity at least of the Self as Agent, as well as the Self as Subject, we should be concerned.

18. For those writers upon Ethics who appear to be trying to reduce Ethics to language and/or logic, or to make of ethical discussion an anthropological enquiry into how, in fact, "ethical" terms are, or have been, used, the difficulty about the Self is, again, that of the contradictory presuppositions we noted in earlier paragraphs. That their difficulty is not in any way specifically "ethical", in the traditional sense, does not remove it.

19. Since the existence of these problems constitutes a destructive criticism, here preferred as the primary,

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<sup>1</sup> From this point of view, indeed, it is the epistemological "atomisation" of the experience of a Self into "mental events" that leads traditional morality into paradox.

epistemological criticism, which applies to all utterance, it applies a fortiori to all discursive systems and, again a fortiori, to the present enquiry; and in consideration of the second of these apparent consequences it would be (at least ideally) part of the purpose of the present thesis to furnish by some "oblique" method (since direct exposition stands condemned ab initio) a formula which might be used to expand the present apparent limitations upon utterance, while, in consideration of the first, it might be illuminating to frame such an attempt within an historical examination of some received doctrine of Personal Identity.

20. In choosing the historical locus of such a frame or context, the division of philosophers into Empiricists and Rationalists is no more than convenient, for in them all the crux noticed in the previous paragraphs sooner or later becomes apparent, the summary accounts of the solutions offered ranging from Hume's classic: "When I enter most intimately into what I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure.

I never catch myself at any time without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception", designated by James Ferrier as "perhaps the hardest assertion ever hazarded in philosophy"; to Kant's: "In the original, synthetic unity of apperception, I am conscious of myself neither as I appear to myself, nor as I am in myself, I am conscious only that I am!"

21. Since, however, the distinction between the conceptualised self implied in all systems of terminology, and that which in experience it purports, although distortingly, to express, appears due to the analyses of the British Empiricist writers, I have chosen to examine, principally, the views of one of the most illustrious of them.

## ii.

22. The matter we have to consider, then, in the first instance historically, is that which finds expression in the conflict between two views of the Self, and this conflict is, I have suggested, at least aggravated by if not grounded in the structure of our language.

23. As we have seen, our ordinary use of language appears to involve the presence of a concept of the Self as a continuant which is the grammatical subject of certain verbs (and the actual existence of this self is included in one, largely Rationalist, view), while the application of language to the attempted description of what is the grammatical subject seems to involve the presence of a concept of the self as in some way a collection, a construct, or series of discrete parts (and this is included in the other, largely Empiricist, view).

24. The former view has sometimes been called the "Pure Ego" theory, and this seems a convenient name to adopt for it. The latter has been variously referred to as the Serial, or Construct, or "bundle" theory, and I shall adopt the term "Constructional" for it.

25. It is with a view generally considered to be akin to the latter that we are, according to the plan adopted, concerned; but I think it is proper to give an ampler, if still summary, account of what is involved in each view, since the clarification of one may be assisted by contrast with the other.

26. The Pure Ego Theory immediately involves us with concepts either of a continuant particular which underlies all, or a timeless particular which is present in each (and in every element of each) experienced series. Either, that is, the Self is that continuant which is identically present in successive conscious states in such a way that the succession is a succession by being and being known as the experiences of "one person" through a life history, or the Self is an ultimate, timeless particular, present in occasions of consciousness, to which empirical events and their qualities are in a unique relation, but which is itself neither relation (only) nor quality, and which does not "contain" relation or quality (i.e. is not internally diverse), being, presumably, monadic. It is, I think, sufficiently apparent that this latter view is not merely a re-statement of the former and does not involve the notion of the Self as "continuant" and therefore in time, because the relation between two or more elements in one instance of consciousness (e.g. the relation between a memory image - involving pastness - and a set of "present" presentations both in one specious present) is not necessarily the same relation or set of relations



("being remembered and compared and contrasted with Now") as that relation in which both, as elements in a "present" total conscious situation, stand to the particular which is the Self -- which latter relation is, on the hypothesis, sui generis. On this latter view it would appear that there is a sense in which I could be said to know my "self" (the ultimate particular) in a manner different from that in which I know my own life history (the empirical relata).<sup>1</sup>

27. In brief, then, the Self on the Pure Ego Theory is either a "subject element" which is successively and literally present in the conscious states that make up the biography of one person, or it is a monad to which certain series of empirical data stand in a unique relation and which cannot meaningfully be spoken of as itself having a "biography".

28. On either of these views of the Self the immediate difficulties which arise are those involved in the question of the nature of our knowledge of such a self. Can we have empirical knowledge of it? i.e. has it empirical

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<sup>1</sup> And this may be what is suggested in the Spinozistic doctrine that we experience our own Eternity.

qualities? In the latter case, ex hypothesi, we cannot and it has not; and in the former, although, as Dr. Broad has pointed out<sup>1</sup>, the fact that we do not perceive any empirical quality does not necessarily mean that such a Self could not have empirical qualities, it remains true that to introspection no empirical quality is indeed perceptible. And it is the appeal to introspection (or "self examination" since the term "introspection" is currently suspect) for the purposes of establishing the nature of the Self, which leads us, through a consideration of the empirical content of examined experience, to the second or Constructional view of the Self, and although it would be to beg too many questions to assert that the examination of this content constitutes the sole avenue to knowledge of the Self, the content which requires examination on this view is certainly of an importance in extent, immediacy, and (prima facie) authority, to make necessary that at least it should be weighed in any account of the Self.

29. The presupposition of this Constructional view is

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<sup>1</sup> "The Mind & its Place in Nature".

that the content of all conscious experience is resolvable into either sensation (in the classical sense) or sensations and some analogue of sensation (if, indeed, we can compass the notion of such an analogue). It is maintained that the "subject term" required in the contrasted theory remains permanently elusive and that all that is left to examination and, indeed, to discursive enquiry, is a pattern, collection, or series of discretely diversified sensation and, perhaps, its analogues. The Self, that is to say, is composed of the series of conscious states (in the last analysis "sensational") which is its biography, and there is no remainder. The locus classicus of the expression of this doctrine is that passage from Hume which can, I think, bear a repetition: "I may venture to affirm ..... that they are nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity and are in perpetual flux and movement."

30. The answer, on this view, to the question: "What account, then, is to be given of the experienced apparent continuity of consciousness which is over and above the mere summation of its parts i.e. that which qualifies an

experience as "mine" and qualitatively uniform in that respect with its predecessors?"; is that, within any specious present there may be present discrete empirical data (in the last analysis sensational or para-sensational) which are some sort of memory- or quasi-memorial images together with others simultaneously and differently experienced as "present", and that is all -- the observed high degree of internal complexity of such presents accounting for the strength of the conviction about a "self".

31. Now there are, as we have already seen, considerable logical difficulties involved in this view, but we are not presently concerned with rigorous criticisms of either view, but only with giving a summary account of what is involved in both.

32. We must now turn to the examination of the account of Personal Identity in Locke's "Essay". This has been chosen for examination both because, even on a cursory reading it appears that some elements in it are consonant with the first of the general views contrasted above, while others appear consonant with the second, and



because, in spite of this, the "Essay" is often regarded as the origin from which was developed an "atomistic" (and often sensationalist) theory of knowledge which has, as part of it, the sort of "constructional" view we outlined. And, as we saw, it was from this point of view that some of the problems about Personal Identity became most obvious.

Whether the historical developments of Locke's views were, in general, founded on a misinterpretation of the "Essay", and whether, in particular, the view of Personal Identity they contain is a consequence of such a misinterpretation -- and it is a view which leaves us in the end with nothing better than the sceptical resignation of the Appendix to Hume's "Treatise" -- are matters which will concern us in the present study, as well as criticisms of Locke's account from other points of view involving some form of the "Pure Ego" theory.

II.

"This brings us to the consideration of Locke's Theory of Personal Identity -- a theory which has passed into a byword of philosophical contempt, and which has been regarded only as an example of the absurdities into which genius may be betrayed."

-- T.E. Webb ("The Intellectualism of Locke").

THE GENERAL NOTION OF IDENTITY IN LOCKE'S ESSAY.

33. Historically, evaluations of Locke's theory of Personal Identity have ranged from those of his near contemporaries and their successors down to the middle of the 19th century, which were for the most part of a nature fully to justify Webb's remark, to the more measured approbation of his most recent expositors such as Professors Gibson and Aaron, e.g. Professor Gibson writes ("Locke's Theory of Knowledge" Camb.1917 pp.118-9): "Locke's treatment of the question of the identity of the self is, in some respects, one of the most original and revolutionary of the positions developed in the Essay.", and Professor Aaron ("John Locke" Oxford 1937 p.140): "Locke's examination of this matter (personal identity), in a chapter added in the second edition, contains some of the closest thinking in the Essay."



34. Among Locke's hostile critics, however, evaluation of this theory (as is the case with some others) is a good deal commoner than minute exposition of what the theory is. We must, therefore, try to produce an adequate exposition in the following sections, and one properly related to the other relevant doctrines enunciated in the Essay.

35. First of all, in regard to the notion of Identity at its most general, it seems reasonable to infer that this was not one of the matters which Locke found most perplexing in his own mind, from the fact that the chapter specifically on Identity and Diversity was added to Book II only in the second edition and at the importunity of Molyneux; Locke having previously, it appears, been satisfied with the more summary statements in IV.i.4 and the genetic account of the idea of Identity in I.iii.4-5.

36. Molyneux, however, being more concerned than Locke with the metaphysical status of the "principium individuationis", elicits from him in this chapter the round assertion: "From what has been said, it is easy to discover what is so much enquired after, the principium

individuationis; and that, it is plain, is existence itself ..... " (II.xxvii.4).

37. Now whether or not this is, in a sense appropriate in metaphysics, adequate, is a matter which notoriously can be disputed; but we are at present less concerned with assessing the value of metaphysical arguments, as such, as between (say) Leibniz's and Locke's, than with establishing as accurately as possible what Locke's views were: consequently we are concerned with the "what has been said" in the quotation above.

38. And in this chapter, xxvii of II, which purports to be his succinct account of the relation of Identity, he says: "..... when considering anything as existing at any determined time and place, we compare it with itself existing at another time, and thereon form the ideas of identity and diversity. When we see anything to be in any place in any instant of time, we are sure (be it what it will) that it is that very thing, and not another...." These things, then, of which identity may be predicated, are things spatially and temporally determined. Again he says: "In this consists identity, when the ideas it is attributed

to, vary not at all from what they were that moment wherein we consider their former existence, and to which we compare the present; for we never finding nor conceiving it possible that two things of the same kind should exist in the same place at the same time, we rightly conceive that whatever exists anywhere, at any time, excludes all of the same kind, and is there itself alone." And again: "That, therefore, that had one beginning in the same thing; and that which had a different beginning in time and place from that is not the same but diverse." (II.xxvii.1-3.)

39. This, then, is "what has been said". Identity is a certain relation between terms originating each in its own place and seen not to vary on repeated observation. Such terms, when related, constitute a thing identical with itself-- in duration. And this seems to be Locke's principal contention; but it must also be noted that, in the quotations above, something else is implied viz. that apart from the identity of something in duration, there is another identity, the identity of simple individua which is immediately discerned without the condition of non-variation in time. Locke says, as above: "When we see anything to be

in any place in any instant of time, we are sure ..... that it is that very thing, and not another...."

40. This point is of some importance, as the ignoring of it leads T.H. Green into making a criticism of Locke's doctrine which, speciously acute, would indeed be damaging if this distinction were not noted.

41. Green's criticism (Works Vol.I pp.60-62) is precisely that Locke fails to distinguish between identity (in time) and "mere"identity". Emphasising those passages which refer to the identity of a continuant, Green points out, quite correctly, that even if the identity of a continuant requires the discernment of non-variation between the appearances of a thing at different times, this does not account for the identity of a thing with itself at a single instant, and this implies that we can never discern the identity between the terms which are the appearances of the "identical" thing at disparate times, because at both of the instants which are those different times, we have no way of knowing the terms (appearances) as self-identical, if identity is, and is solely, the sort of relation discerned in the identity of a continuant -- or which would be discerned if this were possible. Green writes: "When it is

said that the idea of identity ..... is formed upon consideration of things as existing in a certain way, this is naturally understood to mean ..... that the things are first known as existing, and that afterwards the idea of the relation in question is formed..... Either then the 'things' upon consideration of which the idea of identity is formed, are not known at all, or the knowledge of them involves the very idea afterwards formed on consideration of them."

42. Now, it seems to me that this assertion of Green's that Locke confuses rather than distinguishes "mere"unity of individua in an instant with identity in difference of time, is wrong. For one thing, it leaves out of account the sentence from II.xxvii.1 already twice quoted (paras 38-9 above) and, for the rest, it fails to take account of what Locke says in Book IV and elsewhere in Book II on the same matter. And this failure, it seems to me, shews both the minor point that Green does not take sufficiently into account the circumstances in which the "Essay" was composed, and the more important one that he misunderstands Locke's method of exposition which, as we shall see at greater length later (e.g. para.95 below), involves our keeping in mind several different accounts at the same time.

43. It seems hard to believe that Locke did not in fact distinguish between these two sorts of identity, however lax his phraseology in this particular chapter, when one takes into account his assertion at IV.vii.4: "It is the first act of the mind (without which it would never be capable of any knowledge) to know every one of its ideas by itself, and distinguish it from others." or, again, his assertion at II.xxix.6.: "For, let any idea be what it will, it can be no other but such as the mind perceives it to be, and that very perception sufficiently distinguishes it from all other ideas, which cannot be other i.e. different, without being perceived to be so." And, again, at IV.i.4.: "A man infallibly knows, as soon as ever he has them in his mind, that the ideas he calls white and round, are the very ideas they are, and not other ideas which he calls red and square."

44. Again, to reinforce the distinction he is making between these two senses of identity, we may observe how in Book IV.iii Locke makes the two statements:

i. "that the extent of our knowledge comes not only short of the reality of things, but even of the extent of our own ideas" and,



ii. "in this way of agreement or disagreement of our ideas, our intuitive knowledge is as far extended as our ideas themselves; and there can be no idea in the mind which it does not, presently, by an intuitive knowledge, perceive to be what it is, and to be different from any other."

45. Now, these statements which appear incompatible, would in fact be incompatible, if Green's version of the theory were correct. But Locke is here making a distinction very much in point, a distinction between "knowledge" proper, which is in discernment of relations between our ideas ("Knowledge then seems to me to be nothing but the perception of the connection of and agreement, or disagreement and repugnancy of any of our ideas." - IV.i.1) and which is consequently less extended than the number of ideas we may merely have unrelated, and that species of "intuition" which is involved in our simply having ideas which subsequently we may relate, and thereby come by "knowledge".

46. The identity, then, of individua in any one instant is something discerned, I think it is quite plain, by a

species of intuition, while the identity of a continuant, as something our acquaintance with which involves the discernment of relation between temporally diverse terms, is a matter concerning which we have "knowledge".

47. Now, we are not so much concerned with whether or not we do, in fact, have this sort of intuition of the self-identity of individua, as we are with establishing what was Locke's opinion on the matter, and my objection to Green's criticism is that he denies to Locke the making of a distinction which he plainly enough makes, and attributes to Locke a confusion of his own making. (No doubt, had Locke had the opportunity of reading Green's difficulties about the identity of individua, he would have dismissed the Whyte's Professor with a story about the Monkey and his oyster.)

48. Green, it appears, was sufficiently acquainted with the passages I have used to counter his view, but he employs them only to confound his confusion. He writes (Works Vol.I pp.20-21): "The primary knowledge is that of identity -- the knowledge of an idea as identical with itself. 'A man infallibly knows, as soon as ever he has

them in his mind, that the ideas he calls white and round, are the very ideas they are, and not other ideas which he calls red and square.' Now, as Hume afterwards pointed out" says Green, "identity is not simple unity. It cannot be predicated of the "idea" as merely single, but only as a manifold in singleness. To speak of an idea as the 'same with itself' is unmeaning unless it mean 'same with itself' in its manifold appearances, i.e. unless the idea is distinguished, as an object existing continuously, from its present appearances. Thus, 'the infallible knowledge' which Locke describes in the above passage, consists in this, that on the occurrence of a certain 'idea' the man recognises it as one, which at other times of its occurrence he has called 'white'. Such a 'synthesis of recognition', however, expressed by the application of a common term, implies the reference of a present sensation to a permanent object of thought, in this case the object thought under the term 'white', so that the sensation becomes an idea of the object."

49. This appears to me to be a misdescription of the situation, and for reasons why it is so, we may turn to

Locke. Amplifying the rebuttal of Green, we can start by noting that he is himself making the confusion of which he accuses Locke on pages 60-63 of his "Introduction". Appealing to Hume, he makes the point that simple unity and "identity" are not the same thing. Locke, as I have shewn, makes the point himself with sufficient clarity i.e. demonstrates that there are two senses of "identity" relative to this distinction. "Simple unity" is the identity of anything with itself in any one instant. The "identity" of a thing with itself in duration is its identity with itself in its "manifold appearances". And it is now Green who is confusing the two. It is simply untrue to assert that it is unmeaning to predicate identity of an idea unless it is "distinguished as an object existing continuously, from its present appearance." . Because what is presented as self-identical is "its present appearance". What happens when a man "infallibly knows" that he has a self-identical idea, is that, on the view Locke is maintaining, the idea is presented as itself and before it is "recognised" as one "which at other times of its occurrence he has called 'white'" i.e. as a novel psychic occurrence quite undetermined in content. Admittedly it may be recognised (as e.g. "white") and named according to the name of some universal

(of whatever kind); and the "recognition" of it and its inclusion under a general name with other ideas "the same" is a matter which involves "identity in manifold appearances", but it is a different matter, and one which is distinct from the apprehension of an idea as itself. (The predilections which lead Green to mis-read Locke are, of course, made plain enough in the latter part of the quotation.)

50. There is a further consideration which comes readily to mind in any attempt to establish Locke's views on identity viz. how his views on this fit in with his views on the mode of duration -- with which at least one sort of identity he deals with is clearly involved. It is perhaps to be thought strange that Green, who insists on making Locke's view of identity solely the discernment of a relation between temporally diverse terms (e.g. "Locke shows that he really thought of the identical body under a plurality of times."), should have failed to give closer consideration to this, and it is a failure which we may usefully remedy at this point.



51. For Locke, the idea of duration is a "sort of distance, or length, the idea whereof we get ..... from the fleeting and perpetually perishing parts of succession." And these fleeting and perpetually perishing parts are the ideas which pass in succession in our minds. He writes in II.xiv.4.: "That we have our notion of duration and succession from this original viz. from reflection on the train of ideas, which we find to appear one after another in our own minds, seems plain to me, in that we have no perception of duration but by considering the train of ideas that take their turns in our understandings." This argument is illustrated by the common example of the man who, concentrating on one specific thing as hard as may be, fails to have a varied succession of ideas and consequently finds the time "shorter than it is". Again he writes (ibid): "... it is to me very clear, that men derive their ideas of duration from their reflections on the train of ideas they observe to succeed one another in their own understandings; without which observation they could have no notion of duration, whatever may happen in the world."

52. Locke observes further, II.xiv.9.: "This appearance of theirs (the ideas) in train, though perhaps it may be



sometimes faster and sometimes slower, yet, I guess, varies not very much in a waking man: there seem to be certain bounds to the quickness and slowness of the succession of these ideas one to another in our minds, beyond which they can neither delay nor hasten." And this observation leads him to a point which I think is of some importance in the matter of the identity of individua viz. his description of what we mean by an "instant" i.e. that single "instant" in which we know a thing as identical with itself and not as identical in its own manifold appearances in time.

53. He writes, instancing the case of a "cannon-bullet" that passes through a room, II.xiv.10.: "Such a part of duration as this, wherein we perceive no succession, is that which we call an instant, and it is that which takes up the time of only one idea<sup>1</sup> in our minds, without the succession of another; wherein, therefore, we perceive no succession at all."

54. Now, the importance of this passage in an examination of Green's criticism of Locke, is this:

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<sup>1</sup> For what is involved in our having "only one idea", see the very important considerations noted in paras 80-84 below.

according to Green, as above, Locke confines the notion of identity to the discernment of a relation, the terms of which are states or aspects or appearances of a thing in succession. Identity, that is to say, in his account, necessarily involves duration, and this being so, we could never know the terms of the required relation, since we could never know them as self-identical at the instants in which they exist as temporally diverse states or appearances of an identical thing. But in making this interpretation, Green ignores the point that it is highly unlikely that this is what Locke actually had in mind -- on the grounds that such a description of identity does not take account of his description of duration. According to Locke, as above, duration involves the experience of succession, of succession of ideas i.e. duration is a succession of "instants", and an "instant" is that which contains one idea, is that within which there is no succession of ideas. Now, if it were not possible for us to intuit the identity of such a one idea with itself, and not in relation to anything else, then it would not be possible for us to experience duration, since there would be no experience of "instants" to form the succession which is the prerequisite of "duration"; in other words, the

duration which is required by Green's interpretation would, on that same interpretation, never exist as that in which the terms of the relation he posits could be held as diverse. And in such case no such relation would be possible. This is further evidence that Locke distinguishes the identity in "a is a", intuited as such, and the identity of a continuant. The distinction is essential to his Theory of Time, and this strengthens the rebuttal of Green's charge that he has confused the two; a charge which in any case, as I have demonstrated above, is a misreading of Locke. It is unfortunate that Green, having himself raised what turns out to be the hazardous matter of the identity of an individuum "at an instant", did not pause to consider what, for Locke, is involved in "instant" and "duration".

55. It would, however, be disingenuous to leave the matter at that and without noticing a further relevant consideration raised by Locke's account of duration, even although Green does not concern himself with it. And it is this: although Locke's account of duration is of it as a sum of successive, unitary instants, the units of the sum are, as "instants", qualitatively different from the units of a mere arithmetical sum (Cp. Gibson, op. cit. p.76).

Locke writes II.xv.9.: "Every part of duration is duration too, and every part of extension is extension." Instants, that is to say, which are the units which make up the sum which is duration, are themselves, in some sense, "durations" too; and it might seem from this that we would be compelled, paradoxically, to apply Green's analysis of Locke's account of identity to the sort of recognition of identity ("at an instant") which we are maintaining is to be distinguished from it. Because, if there is to be duration "within the instant", then the identity of the idea which is the content of the instant must, presumably, be the relation of identity between the parts of the idea, which are its appearances within the duration of the instant. And this, appearing contradictory, might be taken as making Locke betray our defence of him.

56. I think, however, that the reasonable interpretation of this, and resolution of the apparent difficulty, is that Locke regards his instant as a "specious present". And this view is strengthened and I think justified, by his observation at II.xiv.9.: that "This appearance of theirs (ideas) in train, though perhaps it may be sometimes faster and sometimes slower, yet, I guess, varies not very much

in a waking man." If, now, Locke's "instant" is to be taken as a "specious present", then, within the duration of that specious present, the identity of the idea which is its content, will be apprehended by both means. That is to say it will be apprehended in, so to speak, a "first order" duration, which is duration "within the instant", and in this the identity of the idea will be apprehended both as the relation of identity between its discriminable aspects as, in the one instance, a novel psychic occurrence, and in the other instance, as its apprehended content, and also as the intuition of these terms "simultaneously" presented; and this presentation is called "simultaneous" because (see next paragraph) this "specious present" is the minimum unit of duration. And the double apprehension will constitute the content of the instant or specious present which, with others of its kind, constitute in their sum the "second order" duration in which the identity of a continuant can be apprehended.

57. I do not see that this interpretation initiates a regress or simply "pushes the problem one step further back"; for if an instant (specious present) is that which contains "one idea" and no succession of ideas, then, on



Locke's view, it is the minimum which can be presented to the mind if consciousness is to continue; and in that case the twofold apprehension which must be assumed to account for Locke's assertion that "every part of duration is duration too", must be, even if twofold, simultaneous, and, indeed, I can see no way in which, in this application, any attribution of relative priority could be meaningful.<sup>1</sup> That this double and simultaneous presentation in consciousness is not confined to the matter of duration and identity in Locke's account, we shall see more fully later (see paras 92 & 157 below). We shall find, indeed, that it pervades the whole "plain, historical account", and a recognition of this is of prime importance in interpreting Locke. It is failure to observe this -- particularly, as again we shall see later, in regard to Substance -- partly obscured as it may be by the copious and well observed detail of Locke's analysis, that leads to the historically important misinterpretations of his doctrine.

58. It may be as well to reiterate at this point that we are less concerned with what, in fact, is the origin of knowledge -- with whether it is the sort of judgement

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<sup>1</sup> For a further study of this point see para.95 below.



Green would have us accept, or the sort of intuition of an idea's identity with itself that Locke would have us accept -- than we are with establishing what Locke's views on the matter were. The criticism of Green's interpretation is that as an account of Locke's views it is highly misleading; and we seem, from the foregoing, to have established that, for Locke, identity is both the relation apprehended by the mind between successive appearances of a thing in duration, and the intuition of the identity of an idea with itself (subject to the conditions of "instantaneous" apprehension described above); and that which is the ground of the identity of those things which are apprehended as identical by either or both of these means (since, as we have seen, there is an important sense in which they are simultaneous "within the instant"), is given as "existence".

59. But before we can leave these questions which are still only a necessary preliminary to the examination of our subject proper, personal identity, we must ask the question: what does Locke mean by "existence"? i.e. what is the status of these sorts of thing whose "existence" is given as their "principium individuationis."?

III.

HOW LOCKE USES THE TERM "EXISTENCE".

60. If, in beginning the enquiry into Locke's doctrine of "existence", we recollect that, as we have already found, "existence" is the Principium Individuationis -- that which gives each thing its identity --, and that, of the ways in which things may be "identical" with themselves, subject to this principle and without reference to the sense in which they may be said to "exist", we have so far found in Locke two sorts (viz. "as individua" and "as continuants"), we may expect to find, corresponding to these two sorts of identity, two sorts or orders of existents; and this indeed is the case. In IV.xvii.8 he writes: "Every man's reasoning and knowledge is only about the ideas existing in his own mind; which are truly, every one of them, particular existences ...", but again in II.ii.2 he writes: "When ideas are in our minds, we consider them as being actually there, as well as we consider things to be actually without us; which is that they exist, or have existence." Shortly, that is: there are at least two orders of existents -- "ideas" and "things".

61. Now, notoriously, the relation between these two orders of existence causes perplexity to Locke's readers; and the perplexity is aggravated by every attempt to examine his analysis either, as is almost unavoidable, mainly from the point of view of "ideas", or mainly from the point of view of "things". Locke does not appear himself to take ideas as an order of existence very seriously; the knowledge that we have that an idea exists, either as a natural fact about a mind, or in the sense that its content is self-identical, is "trifling" and un-instructive. Nevertheless, since we shall, I think, be as much concerned with ideas as "existences" as with things, in our special enquiry into Personal Identity -- and to remark this we must anticipate the argument -- I shall attempt to elucidate the doctrine of existence in general by examining T.H. Green's critique of this doctrine, starting, with him, with ideas as existents.

62. Green starts his criticism by noting that, for Locke, the idea of existence itself is one of those which "convey themselves into the mind by all the ways of sensation and reflection" (II.vii.1), and then with reference to the quotation already made above (para.60).

goes on to write (I.para.29): "The two considerations here mentioned, of 'ideas as actually in our minds', of 'things actually as without us', are meant severally to represent the two ways of reflection and sensation, by which the idea of existence is supposed to be suggested. But sensation, according to Locke, is an organ of 'ideas', just as much as reflection. Taking his doctrine strictly, there are no 'objects' but 'ideas' to suggest the idea of existence, whether by the way of sensation or by that of reflection, and no ideas that are not 'in the mind'". Now this is not a very promising start, for it seems to me to be an obvious misinterpretation. Green is attempting to short-circuit Locke's argument by producing the equation:  $\text{idea} = \text{sensation} = \text{idea} = \text{reflection}$ , therefore there is only one order of existents and that is ideas as natural facts occurring in minds. That this is unacceptable as an account of Locke's meaning we can see even from his initial statement on "ideas" as well as from his subsequent usages. In the Introduction to the Essay he writes: "It (idea) being that term which, I think, serves best to stand for whatsoever is the object of the understanding when a man thinks, I have used it to express whatever it is the mind can be employed about in thinking; and I could not avoid

frequently using it." In other words, Locke avers that his intention is to produce a phenomenology of mind, and among its phenomena will be included images, percepts, notions, concepts, phantasms etc., and he admits that any phenomenon is liable, at his convenience, to be referred to as an "idea". But this does not mean that the phenomena are of a uniform kind. They are all the same perhaps in that each is a phenomenon in experience, but they may and do differ in form and content. To emphasise the diversity of the phenomena to be included under the term "idea", we may go on to notice his painstaking discrimination between those phenomena which are "ideas of reflection", and those which are "ideas of sensation". In II.vi.1 he names such things as "remembrance", "discerning", "judging", "knowledge", "faith", as instances of reflection. Ideas of sensation, on the other hand, are such things as "yellow", "white", "heat", "cold", "soft", "hard", "bitter", "sweet" (II.i.3), and these are "distinct perceptions of things" i.e. the ideas of sensations carry with them, or may do so, a reference to external objects. Now, whether or not these ideas of sensation do actually carry this reference with them is, for the present, quite a different matter. Clearly enough Locke is of the opinion



that they do. Consequently it is not legitimate to slur over this distinction among the phenomena of experience which he has been at pains to make. An idea of reflection is e.g., a "remembering" (of whatever the remembrance may be), or a "reasoning" (about whatever the reasoning may be), or a "discerning" (no matter what is discerned), whereas an idea of sensation is e.g., an experience of the colour "green" visually (which is of, or in, or caused by a specific object), or of the taste called "bitter" gustatorily (which is of, or in, or caused by a specific bitter thing) etc.. Among the distinctions Locke is trying to make is this, that these two sorts of idea differ in respect of their content. The contents of ideas of sensation are, in a sense, the more stable, since they refer always beyond themselves to those things which they are "of"; consequently their contents are limited by the range of the order of things which is revealed through them -- those elements, extrinsic to the mind in which the ideas have their "own" natural existence, which constitute the universe or "nature". And this, of course, is why the mind has no control over the series of ideas of sensation presented to it. In II.ii.2 Locke writes: "The same inability will everyone find in himself, who shall go about to fashion in his



understanding one simple idea, not received in his senses from external objects, or by reflection from the operation of his own mind about them." Cp. also II.12.

64. The contents of ideas of reflection, on the other hand, are, from the same sort of view, less stable. Such contents are "reasonings" or "discernings" etc. on the part of the subject; they include every activity which can fall under the two most general headings (II.vi.1) of Perception and Volition. An idea of reflection may be the mind's "reasoning about" the redness and sweetness of a fruit, or the mind's "choosing between" eating it or refraining from eating it. The content of the idea may be altered by the nature of the content of the ideas of sensation "about which" the reasoning is, and the limitation of the range of these ideas "about which" we reason, which we noticed above, and whatever limits there may be on the conative or ratiocinative potential of the mind, may set a limit to the possible content of ideas of reflection, but they (the contents) are still less stable than those of ideas of sensation in that the order of their occurrence is not determined as is that of sensation. I may choose to eat the fruit or merely to admire it, I may reason about it in

this way, or in that, or I may not reason about it at all. The second order of existents does not control the succession of ideas of reflection, because no part of their contents is a thing extrinsic to the mind in which they occur.

65. If this is so, and I believe it properly represents Locke's view, then although it may be possible to say that all ideas are the same in that they are experienced phenomena, it is not possible to reduce one order of them to another. That is to say, an idea of sensation is not the "same as" an idea of reflection, on Locke's view, because the idea of sensation, itself a natural fact, has a content which reveals (by whatever means) an object, while an idea of reflection, also itself a natural fact, has a content which reveals (by whatever means) a mind. Merely to say, ignoring these considerations, that they are the same thing and that therefore there is only one order of existents, and to do this in the first paragraph of a discussion which is precisely concerned with whether there is more than one order of existents, is most assuredly to beg the question.

66. In amplification of this criticism, Green continues by accusing Locke (I.30 et seq.) of failing to distinguish between the meaning of existence as simple consciousness (i.e. ideas existing as natural facts), and its meaning as "reality", and his argument runs thus: existence is given (on Locke's showing) in every act and mode of consciousness. It is inseparable from mere feeling. Yet it is at the same time a distinguishable, simple idea. (More about this anon -- meanwhile I shall only state Green's contention less tortuously, I hope, than it appears in the original). Of this distinct simple idea it is impossible to say anything. It is present together with all objects of consciousness and is never absent so that it can be distinguished from all other objects of consciousness by its absence. It is not given through one of the senses rather than the others, nor in any of them as distinct from the sensual presentation itself. It has no separate determination. (One might have expected Green to remark, by the way, that there is implicit in this -- and his account here is sufficiently correct -- an anticipation of Hegel's observation about the relation of Pure Being and Not-Being; but he does not do so.) Every idea, whether of a rose, a centaur, or the Law of Gravitation, exists.

Yet, complains Green, we find Locke distinguishing between ideas that "have a conformity with the existence of things", and other ideas which have no such conformity. Now, his question is, is this distinction to be squared with the attribution of existence to every idea?

67. The only answer, he correctly maintains, is that a distinction has supervened in the meaning of "existence". In one case reference is to what Locke calls "real actual" existence, and in the other to the indefeasible "existence" of the idea as a natural fact; having, as above, taken the precaution of denying the possibility of such a distinction, it is not surprising that Green finds the contradiction irresoluble.

68. The substance of this criticism from two different important aspects, though remaining based on the same illicit assumption, appears in the continuation of Green's argument viz. a) in a consideration of complex ideas as distinct from simple ideas, and b) in a consideration of the complex idea of substance. (Op. cit. paras 31-39).

69. In dealing with the first consideration, Green notes that in Book II Locke makes the "grand distinction"



between those "complex ideas which are the workmanship of the mind" and the "simple ideas which are all from things themselves, and of which the mind can have no more or other than what are suggested to it." He elects to attack the problem this time from the side of complex ideas and, in particular, of Modes. He notes that "modes", "substances", and "relations", as enumerated by Locke (II.xii.4-5) are not, as described by Locke, mutually exclusive classes but are variously interdependant (loc. cit.), without considering the possibility that Locke is, inconsistently if you like, compelled to deal with them seriatim owing to the natural recalcitrance of what he was trying to write about viz. the phenomena of experience, and not owing to ineptitude. In criticising the doctrine of modes, Green fixes firmly on to the "workmanship of the mind" of the quotation above. If, he says, simple modes are complex ideas, then they are the workmanship of the mind. Yet Locke says that the ideas of such simple modes as sound, or colour, or (more importantly) space, are given. They are among the data of experience. And this antithesis, says Green, between what the mind "makes" and what it takes from "existing things", must simply be left. If, he argues, the simple modes are taken from "existing things" then, indeed, they are simple and our ideas



of them are simple ideas. But Locke's account of them is that they are made up of "different combinations of the same simple idea without the mixture of any other." If our ideas of simple modes are so compounded, then they are "fictions of the mind", and must necessarily be so since their composition involves relation (e.g. the conjunction of "parts" of space), and relations are "fictions of the mind", therefore as such they exist only as "ideas" exist; if they were, in the required sense, simple, and "taken from existing things" then perhaps they would belong to another order of existents, or at least make veridical reference to it, although even then as "taken from existing things", they would refer to these "things" as causes and be causally related to them, and since "cause" just as much as other relations is a fiction, there would still not be, as suits Green's interpretation, any other order of existents.

70. In passing to a consideration of our complex idea of substance, in which his argument (still in essentials the same) is most fully developed, Green notes that in the fundamentals of our knowledge, the "existing things" which are being supposed by Locke as the condition of our



experience, it is the fiction-making activity of the mind in relational thought, in discernment of causal relations, and most of all, in the apprehension of substance, that shews itself, and "things of the mind" (i.e. ideas existing only as natural facts) keep ousting "real existence".

71. This version of Green's argument runs thus: according to Locke there are two distinct stories about our idea of substance. In the first instance, he tells us (II.xxiii.1) that this idea is formed by our taking notice that certain of the great number of simple ideas presented to us either in sensation or by reflection constantly "go together". And to these complexes we, "for quick despatch" give a name, tending to think of that which is so named as one simple idea, whereas it can be analysed into many constituents. And this is so because we "cannot imagine how" these ideas can exist by themselves and consequently suppose a substratum for them to rest in, from which they obtain a sufficiently stable individuation for them to be so named.

72. There is, however, another and rather more complicated account of the idea, which is given in the course

of the controversy with Stillingfleet which arose out of this chapter. And according to this a distinction is to be made between two usages of the term "substance". In the first place there are ideas of "distinct substances" e.g. of "man", "horse" etc.; and in the second, there is the general idea of substance. Now, in II.xxiii.1 he must be talking about the first sort of substance e.g. the various ideas that "go together" to make up what is named "horse", "man" etc., which cannot be imagined as existing only in themselves as ideas -- only as members of the first class of existents. How, then, about the general idea of substance? How do we come by it?

73. As has been seen, the idea of a particular substance is got by noting how certain ideas go together to make or signify named "things", but, among those ideas that so go together, according to Locke, the "first and chief" is that of a "substratum which we accustom ourselves to suppose" i.e. precisely the general idea of substance. Now, Green points out, we are in the position of having the general idea of substance as prior to any particular idea of a substance. But, on the other hand, Locke seems to suggest that it is the general idea of substance that

is formed gradually by the observation that certain groups of simple ideas do go together. That is to say, the general idea of substance is derived from the observation of sets of simple ideas united in or issuing from substances, by abstraction: but before even such sets of ideas can be so observed, the general idea of substance must have already been formed i.e. the general idea of substance is to be derived from particular ideas of substances which cannot exist unless what Locke purports to derive from them, as posterior, is instead prior to them as a condition of their existence. Either the argument is perfectly circular, or the two ideas of substance are obtained by two processes which, according to Green, Locke sometimes identifies and at others regards as independant. But by whatever process we try to account for the complex idea of substance, whether particular or general, there is a main objection yet to come, and it is the same as that which Green has used on the two previous occasions.

74. This time the objection takes the form of a consideration of the "abstraction" by which the idea of substance is formed. It is pointed out (Op. cit. para 39)

that for Locke "abstraction" means the "separation of an idea from all other ideas that accompany it in its real existence." (II.xii.1). And in the reference of this to the question of substance, Green quotes from the first epistle to Stillingfleet that the "general indetermined idea of something is by the abstraction of the mind derived from the simple ideas of sensation and reflection." Now, if abstraction is as in II.xii, and if the idea of substance (i.e. either of the ideas of substance) is derived by abstraction from the simple ideas of sensation and/or reflection, then it is certain that the idea of substance must be given with such simple ideas in order that it may be separated from them. But in that case the simple ideas of sensation and reflection are not simple at all but compound. (This "simplicity" -- about which more anon -- is King Charles's Head for Green.) Apart from that consideration, however, what is the difference to be between the idea of substance "as given" in the (apparently deceptively) simple ideas, and the idea of substance "as abstracted" therefrom? If it is given among or through the data of experience, why should it be made again by "abstraction and recomplication"? What is implied, once again, in the question is, of course,

this: if the idea of substance is "given" at the level of sensation, then substance, that which gives reality to "things", is only an idea of the same order as ideas of sensation and as such "exists" only in the first order of existents -- ideas as natural facts -- and there is no other order of existents; whereas, on the other hand, if the idea of substance obtained by "abstraction and recomplication" is an artifact or fiction of the mind, then likewise, like all other complex general ideas, it "exists" only at the same level i.e. the first order of existents and, once again, there is no other order. And Locke's descriptions, whether they will or no, are fitted into Green's schema which is controlled by the pre-assumption which we noted above (para.62).

75. When he comes to sum up his rather repetitive argument in paras 50-51 of his "Introduction", Green catalogues the following contradictions, as he finds them, in Locke's doctrine of existence, particularly with reference to the version concerned with substance:

- I. A. The idea of substance is an abstract general idea not "given" but "invented"
- but B. the ideas ("given") from which by "Abstraction" it is "invented", are only real as ideas of "something" (= substance),

therefore, the "invented idea" is pre-supposed in the given.

II. A. The general idea of substance being "invented" by "abstraction", it must be given in conjunction with the other ideas from which it is abstracted,

but B. in such conjunction the idea "as given" is constitutive of the ideas of particular substances which are subsequent to the general idea,

therefore, what must be subsequent must also be prior to the "invention".

III. A. The "given" experience from which the "abstraction" is made i.e. "particular substances", is, as such, constituted by relations which must, then, be "given" too,

but B. what is "given" is "real existence" precisely opposed to "inventions of the understanding" such as relations.

IV. A. The "given", as simple ideas made for and not by us, is really existent, and general and complex ideas are the "workmanship of the mind" which consists in the separation of ideas from each other and from that to which they are related as qualities,

but B. since, in order that this "workmanship" may operate, the general idea (that to which ideas are related as qualities) and the complex idea of "qualities of something" must previously exist (be given), then it is the general and complex which is "real" and "given",

therefore, once again, the idea is both given and constructed.



76. So much, then, for an account, as straightforward as may be, of Green's critique of Locke's doctrine of existence: and it seems formidable. Fortunately, however, for Locke's thesis and our patience, Green's arguments are founded on a radical misconception about Locke's theory of knowledge -- a misconception which, we might note, is not singular to Green but which is shared by the tribe of Locke's less discerning critics e.g. Dugald Stewart, Hamilton, Cousin etc.. And this misconception -- for which there is very little excuse in Locke's text -- is concerned with the nature and origin of those phenomena of experience which Locke calls (a) "simple", and (b) "complex" or "compound" ideas.

77. Green has noted (I. para.34) that, in his interpretation, the attempt to break out from the order of ideas to the order of things is haunted by the spectre of our "complex idea of substance" which will not be exorcised, and the point of the problems raised by this inimical haunting is, as we have seen above, that the idea of substance, to be derived from ideas, must first be given with the ideas, so that the ideas from which it is derived can never be "simple" ideas, and Locke says that they are "simple" ideas. This is the mainspring of Green's criticism.

78. It must be admitted that Locke is less than ideally clear in the expression of his opinions on just this point -- which is shrouded in the celebrated ambiguities in his use of "idea" -- but then, as one might be tempted to remark with feeling, Green is not in a good position from which to impute blame to others for obscurity of expression. However, apart from such a "tu quoque", the point is to be made that Locke's usages suggest that he was unaware of the sort of difficulty his critics were to find. By this I mean that although Locke does not at any one point state: "There are two usages of the term 'simple idea' viz. a....., and b.....", he may genuinely have thought that a distinction between the sorts of thing he was describing was sufficiently made in his description as it stands -- as, indeed, I think it is. A fair amount of "ambiguity" is accounted for, I think, by lack of attention on the part of some of his readers, and although I would not lay that particular charge against Green, who is conscientious with the text, he does shew the same determination, amounting to perversity, to accept the mere verbal contradiction of phrases, preposterously insulated from their context, as refutations of elaborately argued positions,

which is displeasingly characteristic of the trivial logomachy of Hamilton and the Frenchman Cousin. To make the charge more precise, we must notice that a radical distinction is to be made between Locke's simple idea as the "atom" of epistemic analysis, and his simple idea as the "given".

79. Admittedly, Locke does not say this in these words; if he had, we would be without those interpretations of the history of philosophy which describe Locke's doctrine as leading to Berkeley's idealism or that position which Hume at least sometimes held, from which the only refuge is, in the steps of the master, historical studies and backgammon. In other words, it is the ignoring of this distinction -- which I think Locke makes sufficiently plain -- that leads to the epistemological "atomism" which is, much more than Locke's "complex idea of substance", the unappeasable shade that haunts and unnerves empiricist discussion even till the era of the sense-datum.

80. But even if Locke did not make the distinction as summarily as I do at the end of para.78 above, he says

plainly, I think, the same thing in effect. The crux of the matter is this: the "simple idea" as the "epistemologist's atom" is not the same as the simple ideas which are furnished to consciousness as its primordial data. The content of a simple idea as "given" may be to varying degrees diversified. I shall hope to shew that the "simple" idea as datum must have a diversified content and that the simple idea as an "atom" is non-natural and must be made by abstraction -- and that, as Locke says, this abstraction, as a matter of fact, is only partially possible.

81. In II.xii.1. Locke writes: "As simple ideas are observed to exist in several combinations united together, so the mind has a power to consider several of them united together as one idea." Now, let us be careful with the grammar of this sentence. Locke is saying that EVEN AS some ideas do go together "as given", SO THEN the mind can consider other ideas as "going together". In other words there is a distinction between data of diversified content, and constructs of diversified content which we may make for ourselves: and to emphasise the distinction Locke writes at the end of the succeeding paragraph:

"But when it (the mind) has once got these simple ideas, it is not confined barely to observation, and what offers itself from without; it can, by its own power, put together those ideas it has, and make new complex ones, which it never received so united." But, it might be said, here Locke is talking avowedly about complex ideas and not about simple ones. This is so; nevertheless the point is to be made that, according to Locke, simple ideas exist in "combinations united together" and they apparently can be "received so united". In other words simple ideas as (abstractly) "atoms", are, as data, given "as compounded"; whereas the same simple ideas as (abstractly) "atoms" when recomposed by the creative imagination are "complex" ideas; and, as the distinction is sometimes put, these latter are made "by" us, and the former "for" us. If it is still said that this is concerned only with "complex ideas" and answers no questions about simple ones, it must be pointed out that it is necessary to begin here both to shew Locke's distinction between "the given" and the elements into which subsequently it may be analysed, and to vindicate his description against the extravagance of such criticisms as Green's which attempt to foist upon him an impossible "atomism", e.g. such criticisms as this of Green's: (I. para.65) - "The particular existence which he instances as



'testified to' is that of 'such a collection of simple ideas as is wont to be called man'. But these ideas can only be present in succession. Even the surface of the man's body can only be taken in by successive acts of vision; and, more obviously, the states of consciousness in which his qualities of motion and action are presented occupy separate times. If then sensation only testifies to an existence present along with it, how can it testify to the co-existence (say) of an erect attitude, of which I have a present sight, with the risibility I saw a minute ago? How can the 'collection of ideas wont to be called man', as co-existing, be formed at all? and, if it cannot, how can the present existence of an object so-called be testified to by sense any more than the past." This sort of criticism, as I say, could only be produced by someone who has not read, or who is determined to ignore, what Locke plainly states about the data of experience; nor does Green palliate this particular extravagance by his references to II.vii.9 and xiv.3 in support of the merely successive occurrence of ideas: for only if "simple" ideas were what Locke does not say they are, but what Green assumes they are, would these passages be any support. Certainly our ideas, as the data of experience, are

successive, and Locke says so; but that is not the same as saying that "there is, and only is, a succession of atoms." (That no moment or instance of experience could ever be of a simple "atomic" idea alone, remains to be demonstrated below.)

82. To amplify our thesis that Locke sufficiently distinguishes the idea as datum and the idea as atom, on the line started by the quotation in para.80 above, we should note that not only does Locke say that certain phenomena, which can subsequently and analytically be regarded as "atomic" ideas, do in fact "go together", but also that certain of them are in immutable combination. For example: in II.xii.25 "the idea of extension joins itself inseparably with all visible and most tangible qualities." Again in II.iii.1 we read of "Simple ideas suggested to the understanding by all the ways of Sensation and Reflection." Again, in II.vii.2 and 3 "delight" and "uneasiness" "join themselves to" and are "concomitant" of "almost all our ideas both of sensation and reflection." Or, even more pertinently, in II.vii.7: "Existence and unity are two other ideas that are suggested to the understanding by every object without and every idea within."

Again, in II.vii.8: "Power is another of these simple ideas which we receive from sensation and reflection." Again, in II.xiii.26: "There is not any object of sensation or reflection which does not carry with it the idea of one." And as to "number", in II.xvi.1 he writes: "every object our senses are employed about, every idea in our understanding, every thought of our mind, brings this idea along with it." In II.xiv.2: "As for the idea of finite, there is no great difficulty. The obvious portions of extension that affect our senses, carry with them into the mind the idea of finite ..." And, to finish off, we may repeat the quotation from II.vii.7 with which Green, for opposite purposes, commences his argument: "When ideas are in our minds we consider them as being actually there, as well as we consider things to be actually without us, which is that they exist or have existence; and whatever we consider as one thing, whether a real being or an idea, suggests to the understanding the idea of unity."

83. If, against the contention that, as Locke makes clear above, simple ideas are not experienced as such, in their simplicity, but always in combinations in one or various of the senses and together with such necessary

concomitants as ideas of existence, unity, etc., and are in fact only experienced in their simplicity after and by means of the analysis of the percepts, images, concepts, etc. which, in another vocabulary, make up the phenomena of experience, it is urged that in II.ii.1 Locke distinctly says: "And there is nothing can be plainer to a man than the clear and distinct perception he has of these simple ideas; which, being each in itself uncompounded, contains in it nothing but one uniform appearance, or conception in the mind, and is not distinguished into different ideas." then the answer is that this says, in fact, nothing against the present contention. The crucial phrase, as I see it, is "one uniform appearance." But what are these "uniform appearances"? If we look at the context of this passage, we find that what is being talked about is the set of ideas of sensation, which may be present simultaneously through different senses, of one object e.g. the warmth and softness of a piece of wax or, more generally, the motion and colour of something. Yet, says Locke, these ideas though united in presentation are perfectly distinct, but it is not suggested that they are presented singly, atomically, and "distinctly". What is presented is not the "coldness" of ice, or the "hardness" of ice, but the "cold-hard ice";



not the "perfume" of a lily and the "whiteness" of a lily in succession, but the "white, perfumed lily". Admittedly the "whiteness", the "perfume", the "hardness", the "coldness" can be considered apart as distinct from the rest of the datum e.g. we can distinguish the "hardness" of ice as an "atomic" idea, provided that the "cold-hard ice" continues to be presented to us. Indeed, all this passage does is to underline again the crucial distinction between "simple" as "given" and "simple" as "abstraction".

84. Further to this, we might fall to the speculation -- and it is one which might have profited Green and others -- "what possibly could a completely "simple" idea be? and how could it be experienced?" What, for instance, would be the completely simple idea of sensation called "green" as experienced? If we do what in ordinary language is called "looking at a cooking apple" we have, according to this sort of analysis, an idea, among others, of green. There is presented to us a complex, one element of which is the idea of sensation "green". The complex is made up of this idea together with others. But what of the "simple" idea of "green" i.e. of "green" or "this green" as an epistemological atom? "This green" is, we seem compelled to say. a "patch" of a specific colour or an "area"



of it. It is a piece of, or a superficies of, "green" extending to left and right and up and down, or from north to south and east to west, or at least in relation to some spatial coordinates. And this is precisely the point. The simple idea of green is, as presented, (whatever it may be in abstraction), extended green, or it is nothing. But if it is, then it cannot be the simple idea "green" after all, because there is discriminable in it, colour and extension. Therefore the completely simple idea of green is never given; nor did Locke ever suggest that it was. Likewise with tactual sensation; the smoothness of the cooking apple must be presented as extended, or it is nothing. The simple idea "smoothness" is never presented. No simple idea which has a visual or tactual content can ever be "simple" as an epistemological atom would have to be simple; it can only be presented with and through the mode of extension. In the case of simple ideas (in the sense of data) whose content is not visual or tactual but is e.g. auditory, although the idea may not have to be presented with and through the mode of extension (thereby destroying its abstract "simplicity"), it does have to be presented with and through the sister mode of duration, or it is nothing; and if its duration and auditory content are discriminable, then it is not simple as an atom is simple,

nor could it be experienced as such. Likewise, as Locke very properly points out, with "existence". Not only does my "simple idea" of green (as a datum) have a content diversified into colour and extension, but also into colour, extension, and what in abstraction can be discriminated as its existing now. If this is not so, then I am involved in saying "I now have an idea of green which I do not have." And this remark does not seem to require further comment.

85. For all of this there is, as we have seen above, ample warrant in Locke's text. The conclusion, roundly, is that according to Locke no moment of consciousness is or can be solely occupied by any "simple" idea in its simplicity.<sup>1</sup> So far from being an "atom", Locke's simple idea (as datum) has the following minimum concomitants -- at least as refers to simple ideas of sensation -- :

a discriminable sensual content,  
a modal vehicle of extension and duration  
an idea of its existence as a natural fact,

and nothing less is, or can be, experienced. These are

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<sup>1</sup> What, indeed, we may have, during the ratiocinative activity of abstraction, is a simple idea of reflection (see para.86 below) part of the content of which is the "abstracting" itself as object, but not a simple idea of what "is abstracted".

what must be present in any datum. Locke contends that other things are, sometimes, also present, but that remains to be considered.

86. So far we have been considering the simple idea as datum principally from the side of simple ideas of sensation. If we turn now to the consideration of them from the side of simple ideas of reflection, we can see that, obviously, the minimal condition of presentation in the mode of extension will not apply. A simple idea of reflection is, as we have seen, of a "reasoning" or "believing" etc., and it is "of" such an operation as an object, (II.i.8): "the understanding turning inwards upon itself, and making its own operations the object of its own contemplation." The content, then, of a simple idea of reflection is the "operation" as an operation and distinct from the material operated upon and from any other phenomena, having an independant existence perhaps after analysis, which may be generated by or during the operation. But, as such, it must, like all other simple ideas as data, be presented in and through the simple mode of duration and with the simple idea of existence. That it must be subject to the mode of duration, as presented, follows from the fact that a "reasoning", for example, involves the passage of

awareness from one phenomenon to another in the course of a discursive activity -- and Locke is at pains to establish that the mind "can compare" -- which at the same time holds the matter of the reasoning, diverse as successive, together in the operation which is the object of the simple idea of it. If it is objected that this might not apply to such a simple idea of reflection as "discerning", we must revert to the analysis given much earlier (para.56 above) where it was seen that even to know the identity of a single idea with itself "within the instant", there was involved, on Locke's view of the simple mode of duration, a second order succession within a specious present; which only emphasises the present thesis that any simple idea of reflection cannot, in presentation, be "simple" as the abstraction "an atomic idea" may be considered to be simple.

87. Now, as we must keep in mind, the whole purpose of this present argument is to rebut Green's charge that for Locke there can be only one order of existents viz. ideas as natural facts, a criticism grounded on the contention that the simple ideas from combinations of which Locke purports to derive information about other orders of existents ("things" and "minds"), are not simple,



and that therefore the analysis is wrong. So far we have established that Green has misread Locke in attributing to him a view of the given, in and from which knowledge of these other existents is obtained, which makes it consist of ideas having a sort of "simplicity" which Locke never suggests and which it is demonstrably impossible to experience. If, therefore, Locke's phenomenological analysis is wrong -- the analysis, that is, of the phenomena of experience into ideas "of" things, "of" minds, and "of" other ideas -- then it is certainly not wrong on the grounds Green has to shew.

88. Having identified the course of this important misreading of Locke, we should now restate his doctrine of existence in a form which avoids the consequences of it.

We may note that, as a matter of history, it was not left for Locke's later critics alone to misinterpret him through inattention to his use of the word "idea". A fair part of the first letter to Stillingfleet is taken up by a patient attempt to make the point that "idea" refers to a great many things which must form the greater part of any man's experience, including Stillingfleet's, and among that greater part is experience of the existence



of objects and minds. Locke writes (Works 17th ed. vol.IV p.7): "Nay, as long as there is any simple idea or sensible quality left, according to my way of arguing, substance cannot be discarded; because all simple ideas, all sensible qualities, carry with them a supposition of a substratum to exist in, and of a substance wherein they inhere; and of this that chapter (II.xxiii.) is so full, that I challenge any one who reads it to think I have almost, or one jot discarded substance out of the reasonable part of the world." And to emphasise the point further that "simple ideas" are not what both Stillingfleet and Green would have them, Locke quotes himself from II.xxiii.29 as saying that: "sensation convinces us that there are solid extended substances: and reflection, that there are thinking ones."

89. Now, in terms of the present account of Locke's position, these things amount to this: the data of ordinary experience, of which a plain historical account is being given, are to be called "ideas". And, for the purpose of giving a plain, historical account, these ideas may be regarded, and talked of, as relative unities --

to avoid a more dangerous term.<sup>1</sup> But within these relatively unitary ideas there is diversity of content constituted by elements which are discriminable only in abstraction and never in experience. Not only do these elements, indissolubly united as experienced, include, when catalogued in abstraction, "duration", "self-identity", and sometimes "extension", as well as in some cases a sensual content no more experienceable in its simplicity than they, but also sometimes, Locke is here saying, a given reference to, or representation of, an order of entities of the same degree of unity with them, with which they are intimately and indissolubly and discernibly connected -- i.e. "physical" and "mental or spiritual" things. That is to say, the diversified content of the unitary idea e.g. "of a green object" contains an awareness (by no means precise and clear -- which is good observation on Locke's part) of the object, but the awareness of the object can no more be experienced and so contemplated, as itself apart from "its" green-ness

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<sup>1</sup> To guard ourselves against misunderstandings to which others have been prone, we may note that, historically, this way of speaking for that purpose is justified, whether in Locke's case it was "inevitable" or no, on the grounds that it employs what was for Locke's readers as well as himself the current educated vocabulary founded on the terminology and usages of the "atomic", "compositional" metaphysics of the 17th Century -- for which elucidation we are indebted to Professor Gibson.

than can the green-ness itself (i.e. the sensual content) be experienced and ~~so~~ contemplated apart from (as we have shewn) "its" extension and duration. Not all such ideas necessarily have this element in their diversified content -- it is not necessary as duration is necessary; because among the phenomena of experience there can be such relatively unitary ideas (their unity subject, as ever, to the minimal conditions noted) which are revived by the mind ~~from~~ previous presentations of only similar ideas which then did contain this element, but which now, as revived ideas, do not, -- likewise with "imagined" and constructed ideas which the mind may compound out of such revived ideas. Nevertheless, all such derivative phenomena in consciousness ultimately, as Locke clearly says, terminate and are grounded in ideas which originally contain this element in them. But although it is not necessary that this "element" (as it is in abstraction) should be present in all relatively unitary ideas of the order of "idea of a green object", it is important to note that in certain other relatively unitary ideas which may be distinguished ~~from~~ these, there is, and must be, always present a similar element viz. an awareness of a "mental" or "spiritual" thing (again by no means precisely and



clearly). In other words, although a simple idea of sensation may in some cases -- e.g. when it is, or is part of, a memorial image -- lack this element, a simple idea of reflection can never have a diversified content that lacks it. A "simple" idea of reflection is a relatively unitary idea containing, necessarily, "duration" and "self-identity" as well as e.g. a "believing" or "discerning" (or in general a volition or perception) as an object, and the awareness that it is mine i.e. that it is in, or of, "my mind". Locke is abundantly clear that all consciousness includes self-consciousness i.e. that this element is always present in simple ideas of reflection as experienced. (See, e.g., para.123 below).

In brief, among the data of ordinary experience are included awareness of "physical things" and awareness of "spiritual beings" which are part and parcel of "ideas" and which are not isolable from them in experience, and which as abstractions are awkward to talk about.

90. But this is obviously not all that there is to Locke's account, which is much less simple and more accurate; and perhaps this has only been too obvious to his hostile critics who, like Green, have found the

elaboration of his account we are now going to consider, merely an irreconcilable contradiction with the foregoing.

It is maintained above that, according to Locke, knowledge of existence i.e. of orders of existents other than of "ideas as existents", is given, however obscurely, among the data of experience i.e. in and through the "ideas" which are the data -- and, as we have seen, it is not much more mysterious or elusive than is "green-ness" as such alone, or "duration" as such alone, about which there appears to be greater confidence. But our knowledge of other existents consists in more than this. An examination of the constitutive phenomena of our experience reveals, according to Locke, general ideas of substance and of substances which are other than, and over and above, that awareness of objects (and spirits) which is discriminable but not isolable (~~like qualities~~) in the given.  
*(Just as qualities are not isolable)*

91. Before we examine this further, let us take the preliminary precaution of noting that when Locke talks of this phenomenon, or of these phenomena, it is unsafe to presuppose that he is talking about the same thing as we have been considering above. He is in fact examining another sort of phenomenon which, together with what we



have already examined, is found to occur in our experience when we examine it carefully for the purpose of giving a plain, historical account thereof.

A little further on in the first letter to Stillingfleet from the point we last quoted (i.e. Works Vol.IV p.19) Locke writes: "..... for I have never said that the general idea of substance comes in by sensation and reflection; or, that it is a simple idea of sensation or reflection, though it is ultimately founded in them: for it is a complex idea, made up of the general idea of something, or being, with the relation of a support to accidents. For general ideas come not into the mind by sensation or reflection, but are the creatures or inventions of the understanding, as, I think, I have shown; and also, how the mind makes them from ideas, which it has got by sensation and reflection: and as to the ideas of reflection, how the mind forms them, and how they are derived from, and ultimately terminate in, ideas of sensation and reflection, I have likewise shown." What Locke is talking about here is one order of the phenomena of our experience which is not "given" as those we considered formerly are given.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> From this and from what is said in para.90 above, it is obvious that I must disagree with the emphasis at least of Professor Gibson's interpretation (op.cit. p.92).

They are the results of the operation of consciousness itself on the given-in-consciousness. They are the "ideas" resulting from discursive activity exercised about other ideas e.g. "of objects" and "of mental operations", and are, certainly in a sense, derivatives of these. These "ideas of" having been given in the way we have seen, this latter sort of idea is constructed from them, and they (the latter sort) are "founded" and "terminate" in them, but are not given with them. In particular, the complex idea which is the abstract general idea of substance is thus derived from what is given (and this, most importantly, includes an awareness of objects - things and minds) and it is a relative idea i.e. it is the idea "of" a non-ideal correlate to these originally given ideas, and this is something quite distinct from the given element of "thinghood" or "mind" in the original ideas, the correlate of which we are now considering. Again in the first letter we read (Vol.IV p.21): "The ideas of these qualities and actions, or powers, are perceived by the mind to be of themselves inconsistent with existence..... Hence the mind perceives their necessary connection with inherence or being supported; which being a relative idea superadded to the red colour in a cherry, or to thinking in a man, the mind frames the correlative idea of a support." The

content of this complex idea, then, consists of the terms of a relation, and one terminal of the perceived relation is the series of "first order" ideas in the given, and the other is that which makes the "first order" ideas to be the ideas "of things", though their being such is, at another level, as we have seen, "given". Locke observes that he has never "denied that the mind could frame to itself ideas of relation" but that he has "showed the quite contrary in my chapters about relations." (Loc.cit.). Now, the second terminal of the relation cannot, Locke maintains, be nothing, for a relation cannot "be founded in nothing, or be the relation of nothing." (loc.cit.). But, on the other hand, as Locke points out, there is no clear and distinct idea of it; it is an obscure idea, a something-I-know-not-what. This need not, however, be any insuperable difficulty; the difficulty and inadequacy of our knowledge of the non-ideal terminal of the relationship only becomes apparent when an attempt is made to analyse out the terms as "atoms" from their complex presentation. The content of our idea of the terminal is no more elusive or mysterious than the content of any idea of sensation: just as it is impossible for us, as we have seen above, to isolate the content of our idea of "green" and take it apart from its necessary minimal concomitants, so is it

impossible to isolate for contemplation by itself the correlate of the original presented ideas. It is known only and sufficiently in its relation to them (they being its minimal necessary concomitants); it is unknowable without their compresence, and the attempt to know it otherwise is to draw water in a sieve.

92. What has been said above applies, of course, just as much to the complex idea of substance as referred to minds as it does to the same somplex idea as referred to things.

The important thing from the point of view of our interpretation, is that this complex idea, part of the content of which (and a "non-isolable" part) is the correlative idea of a non-ideal correlate to the ideas "of things" and "of mental activity" in which it is grounded and from which it is derived, is an idea of a different order from those ideas on which it is grounded and from which it is derived. It is not a part of them, given with them. It is not the "same" idea, both "given" and "derived", as Green would have us believe. It is not presupposed in our having the first sort of idea; it is completely distinct from and subsequent to them. It is



another part of our experience, and when, for example, Green says that the process by which we arrive at the complex idea of substance is the same in the end as it was in the beginning (I.39), he is, in a sense, correctly describing the situation, but without insight. The knowledge we have "at the end" is the same as that which we had when we set about constructing the complex idea, in that it is knowledge "of the same thing"; but the phenomena which are the vehicle of the knowledge in the two cases are diverse, even although the latter knowledge is "grounded in" the given and, in the end, returns to terminate in it i.e. even although the general idea is derived from a number of particular ideas (part of the content of which constitutes our first sort of knowledge) and, when derived, is found to give us another form of knowledge of what we already know. If you like, our knowledge is reduplicated in the phenomena presented to us both "in the given" and "~~by~~ abstraction", and I maintain that it is precisely the virtue of Locke's analysis that he takes note of this. Our experience is not so tidy as Green makes it out to be -- and as Locke, very properly, does not.

In other words, what Locke is saying is this: among the multitudinous phenomena of our experience, there are the

(relatively) "simple" ideas (which are absolutely simple only in an inexperienceable abstraction) which contain as part of their content the awareness of the ~~existence~~ of that "of which" they are. There are also among the phenomena of experience, complex ideas, and in particular, the complex idea of substance which has as part of its content the awareness of a non-ideal correlate, in general, to the ideas presented, simultaneously with and over and above the awareness "of things" given with the ideas, in particular. In other words, we have knowledge of orders of existents other than ideas in two distinct and often simultaneous ways. And this is the answer to the sort of criticisms we analysed in, for example, para.75 above. (That, according to Locke's account, we do in fact have in experience knowledge simultaneously ~~by~~ two different channels and at two different levels -- and not only in regard to this particular matter of substance -- we saw much earlier in considering the idea of identity in para.56 above.) Our knowledge of "reality", as contrasted with "ideas", is then indeed both "given" and "derived". But the knowledge we have "given" is not the same as the knowledge we "derive". They are contained in quite different sets of phenomena, both of which may be present at once in our experience. The latter is not



presupposed in the former. And this, which is in fact a striking and persuasive piece of phenomenological analysis on Locke's part, is misapprehended by Green (& other hostile critics) as merely a bad argument. Certainly, if Locke's views about the nature of the given were as Green would like us to believe they were, and as, no doubt, Hume's were later, then it would be a bad argument, but Locke's views were, as we have seen, quite otherwise, and there is little excuse for fathering our own or his successors' epistemological myths upon him. It is, indeed, the copiousness and accuracy of Locke's phenomenological analysis in the "plain historical account" that has confused his critics, and not his own inconsistency and mal-observation.

The main point is: we know existing things in two ways and sometimes simultaneously in two ways. The "new way of ideas" is not by any means so narrow as Locke's critics would make it; and in particular it is broad enough to permit the passage into our experience of more than "atoms", even if it was to be abridged later, and perhaps mistakenly, by Hume.

93. We started out on this part of the enquiry from the point where we had found that for Locke the principle of identity is existence. We have subsequently been enquiring into which things do exist, and how we know that they do. We have found, to sum up, that:

ideas exist as natural facts, and as such each has its own identity,

things exist apart from the ideas through which they are revealed and so each has its own identity

minds exist apart from the ideas contained in them, and so each has its own identity

and, for the rest, we have been concerned with expounding Locke's account of how we know this is so. We should note too that this three-fold order of existence included the two sorts of identities which, we saw above (paras 33-39), Locke distinguishes viz. the identity of ideas (as individua), and the identity of "continuants" (e.g. "things" and "minds").

94. But before we can leave this part of the enquiry entirely and proceed to the next examination, which is of Locke's views concerning "continuants" as "organic identities", we must pause to make clear that there is nothing in the foregoing which by itself, as might seem at first sight,

resolves the main problem we are concerned with viz. that of personal identity. The fact that Locke establishes that minds exist apart from the ideas they contain and so have identity, tells us little about personal identity, and for this reason: that although it is true that every simple idea of reflection we experience, must have, as one of its minimal necessary concomitants, an awareness which is a reference to the mind "whose idea it is" (see para.89 above), this tells us nothing but that there is a "spiritual substance" revealed in the idea as underlying it. It does not tell us, for instance, whether or not it is the same substance as is revealed in immediately preceding and subsequent ideas, or whether it perishes with the passing of the idea. It does not establish the existence of that "subject element which is successively and literally present in the conscious states that make up the biography of one person", to which we referred in the Introduction to the present enquiry. And, as we shall see, it is a consideration of this that leads Locke to enunciate one of his most striking doctrines.

IV.

CONTINUANTS AS "ORGANIC IDENTITIES".

95. We have found, then, that "identity" may be attributed to three distinct orders of existents, one of them "ideal" (i.e. the ideas themselves) and two of them un-ideal (i.e. minds and objects), and we have seen that according to Locke's account there are, in our experience, certain indissoluble connections among these three, and that indeed our experience is totally constituted by these three orders of existents and their connections, or in their various connections. And at this point we must stop to note something arising out of this which, although it may be a digression from the immediate topic, is too important, for the present interpretation, to be relegated to a footnote. And it is this: it does not seem to be safe, or fair to Locke, to assert any more than that these three orders "are connected"; in particular it is unsafe and unfair to Locke to try to narrow down this "connection" to the "representation" of the two latter by the former. (It is perhaps unnecessary to labour over again the disasters consequent upon doing so.)

Admittedly Locke often speaks in "representational" terms (although, as Professor Aaron points out, "with no great enthusiasm"), but at other times, as I have shewn, he does not. To give a further and plain example of this -- the "simple idea" of Existence does not represent Existence. Ideas, whether simple or compound, and whether sensory "images" or otherwise, in "being had", exist, and we in merely having them, "know existence", which "knowing" is the simple idea of Existence -- similarly for the other Modes. An idea is not only, or need not be, on Locke's view, an "image of" or "picture of" something else. An idea is whatever phenomenon is discriminable in consciousness, whether it is, or is part of, for example, a smell of onions, a moral aspiration, a twinge of rheumatism, or our entertainment of the notions of contingency and necessity. Likewise, he sometimes speaks in terms of a dualistic analysis, an analysis that accepts the "two parts of nature" (Cp. Hendel: "Studies in the Philosophy of David Hume" Cap.8, and Laird: "Hume's Philosophy of Human Nature", pp.38-41), but at other times he shews that he is capable of thinking and is prepared to speak in different terms, particularly in the celebrated passage at IV.iii.6 which occasioned so much



ecclesiastical alarm -- perhaps, indeed, as Professor Kemp Smith has brilliantly suggested,<sup>1</sup> he was too good and experienced a physician ever to accept a radical dualism of mind and matter: likewise, he often speaks, as we have seen, in terms of an "atomic" and "compositional" metaphysics, but again (as we shall see precisely in the present examination of organic identity) he shews himself capable of eluding the fetters of an inherited and closed conceptual system. I suggest that all these are different "manners of speaking" adopted by Locke at his convenience to describe always the same thing viz. what he experienced. It has been remarked for us by Professor Kemp Smith (op. cit.) that his reading was mostly among the work of his contemporaries, and was sparing at that, and that his philosophical activity appears to have been stimulated by conversation in an enlightened and strenuously intellectual circle of friends; it might then be natural to suppose that his technique of exposition should have something of the variable expression, including and adapting technical and semi-technical terms appropriate now to one sort of general outlook and now to another, which is almost necessary in intelligent conversation with

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<sup>1</sup> "John Locke. The Adamson Lecture for 1932." Manchester University Press 1933.

men of diverse interests and, each in his own sphere, considerably informed.<sup>1</sup> I suggest that in carrying out that most difficult of tasks viz. giving a plain, historical account of our experience, he first of all kept what he was describing steadily before him -- wherein lies the great strength of the Essay -- and used whatever terms were available and most appropriate to the immediate object, to communicate what he observed in a way that the readers he had in mind could follow, and that in doing so he used more than one accepted figure, or system of figures, of speech, to describe one thing; that, in fact, what he was doing unavowedly was what a recent writer has suggested is a necessary precaution in the attempt to give any such account, when he says: "Where the use of metaphor is unavoidable, it seems that the best way to escape being misled by them, especially by one's own favourites, is to use as great a variety as practicable. This at least reduces the risk of coming to unwarranted conclusions by assuming that a characteristic which is peculiar to some one metaphor is a characteristic of the situation which

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<sup>1</sup> Cp. "The Epistle to the Reader" -- "My appearing therefore in print being on purpose to be as useful as I may, I think it necessary to make what I have to say as easy and intelligible to all sorts of readers as I can."

the metaphor is being used to describe." (W.A. Sinclair "The Conditions of Knowing".) It does not appear to me that there is anything very improbable involved in attributing to Locke enough sagacity to anticipate this recommendation in his practice. What Locke was doing was to change the vocabulary and system of concepts he used in his description -- while keeping what he described steadily in view -- whenever the passage of his attention from one part of what he described (i.e. the content of his experience) to another, brought him upon something which could not be described in a manner intelligible to himself or his readers in the same terms as he had described another and different part. But to say this is not to say (as has been said to weariness) that he gave a contradictory account of that experience. It might have been (or be) possible to give a plain, historical account that did not involve these switches from one mythology to another, but it was not, he found, possible to do it within the bounds of ordinary English, and it would have involved him in the construction of a private language or jargon; and for these, Locke, to his credit, had no liking. It is on grounds of this sort that I tend to think that the

interpretations of Locke's modern critics, e.g. Professors Aaron<sup>1</sup>, Gibson<sup>2</sup>, Kemp Smith<sup>3</sup>, and Samuel Alexander<sup>4</sup>, although acute and sympathetic, do less than justice to Locke in emphasising the diversity, or even irreconcilability, of the different ways in which he describes things, ways which fall into two general kinds viz. those appropriate to the two "levels" of experience suggested earlier. For, although even in this they avoid the extravagance of Hegelian or Hamiltonian sorts of criticism, they seem to suggest that the two theories of knowledge which are said to be revealed (corresponding, very roughly, to what is said in Book II. and Book IV.) are, even if complementary, impossible to reconcile and therefore represent a failure on Locke's part<sup>5</sup>, whereas, I suspect, the two different sorts of account are not due to inaccurate observation or

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<sup>1</sup> Op.cit. <sup>2</sup> Op.cit. <sup>3</sup> Op.cit. <sup>4</sup> "Locke" in the series "Philosophies Ancient and Modern". Constable, London 1908.

<sup>5</sup> Even Whitehead writes, in "Process and Reality" II.vi.: "The merit of Locke's "Essay Concerning the Human Understanding" is its adequacy, and not its consistency. He gives the most dispassionate descriptions of those various elements in experience which common sense never lets slip. Unfortunately he is hampered by inappropriate metaphysical categories which he never criticised." and this last sentence, which I have italicised, seems to me to misplace the emphasis, as does his later statement ("Process and Reality" II.vi.ii): "Nothing can make the various parts of his "Essay" mutually consistent", although otherwise Whitehead goes furthest of any writer I know in elucidating the nature and scope of what Locke was doing.



ineptitude on Locke's part, but are due, for example, to the sort of phenomenon in our experience which I have called "double-presentation". For example, there are two ways, as we saw in paras 56-58 above, in which we simultaneously apprehend the self-identity of any individuum -- firstly we apprehend it as a relation between the idea (the individuum) as a psychic event and the idea as that event's ideal content, and this is the relation of the idea's successive appearances within the duration of the moment; secondly we intuit the event as such, and the ideal content as such, together at once. So that, it appears, our apprehension is at once durational and non-durational; it is durational because the relating of the idea's diverse appearances to each other requires duration, and non-durational because the terms of the relation must be apprehended each as itself (and not as the apprehension of identity between yet further appearances) for there to be relation at all; but yet, again, it is durational because "every part of duration is duration too", while for there to be duration there must be succession of ideas, and for individual ideas to be related "as successive", they must be intuited non-durationally as the terms of such a relation. And this



sort of account, as we saw, is to be dismissed, according to such criticisms as Green's, as a mere reductio ad absurdum, with no consideration of its possible justification by experience. But that there is something odd, in our experience, about what we know, e.g. the identity of a thing with itself, from the perception of relations (which are "fictions of the mind"), and what we know "as given" to intuition, e.g. individual ideas, Locke is well aware, as we can see from IV.iii.29 where he writes: "In some of our ideas there are certain relations, habitudes, and connexions, so visibly included in the nature of the ideas, that we cannot conceive them separate from them by any power whatsoever." Again, writing in II.xxi.3 of what he wishes to call the simple idea of power, he writes even more pertinently to the present paradox in experience: "I confess power includes in it some kind of relation ..... as indeed which of our ideas, of what kind soever, when attentively considered, does not? For, our ideas of extension, duration, and number, do they not all contain in them a secret relation of the parts?" From which we can see that Locke was quite aware that in our experience of relationships (even those of identity) and of their given terms, there is something too complex for it to be described

adequately by either account alone. Consequently, unless we keep in mind that his intention was to describe our whole experience by the best means possible, we shall fall into the error of making criticisms which consist only in pointing out the inconsistencies between those of his descriptions which are descriptions of part of our experience, and the futility of this sort of criticism was transfixed for all time by Kant when he wrote in the first Critique (K.r.V. B xliv): "In every writing, above all when it proceed as a free discussion, it is possible to ferret out apparent contradictions by comparing together isolated passages torn from their context. Such apparent contradictions cast a prejudicial light upon it in the eyes of those who depend upon criticism at second hand, but they can easily be resolved by anyone who has mastered the Ideas as a whole." This does not mean that any account of experience, however inchoate and contradictory, will serve as well as any other. No such account may be gratuitously contradictory, and I do not think that Locke's is. In other words, the two sorts of account, unreconciled, constitute an accurate account of experience. The accounts are incompatible because what Locke experienced (and we experience) is like that; and to dismiss this out of hand on the grounds

that any account of our experience must be wholly coherent because our experience itself is not so "contradictory", or is not such that it cannot be described (in English) without contradiction, is merely to demonstrate the holding of certain rationalistic or linguistic presuppositions which, whence-ever derived, have nothing at all to do with what we actually do experience.<sup>1</sup> That this dualism or "ambiguity" in Locke's account is the consequence of the nature of our experience as it is, will, I hope, become clearer as our progress to and examination of his doctrine of the Self develops; indeed it must, if there is anything at all in my interpretation, for the problem of the Self is as crucial in Locke's essay as it is in any other philosophical essay which pretends to completeness.

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<sup>1</sup> That what we thus "experience", is illusion, as against the "reality" of what is assumed in these presuppositions, might be the case, but as illusion we do have it, and with what we do experience Locke is avowedly concerned. The reasons why, historically, the fact that experience, in Locke's sense, cannot be described in terms of a certain group of languages having a certain syntactical structure, without verbal contradiction, should have compelled some thinkers to assert that experience is therefore in some sense "unreal", do not concern us here.

96. To revert, however, to our immediate subject, "organic" identity, we may note that two of the orders of existents to which we attribute identity viz. objects and minds, come under the wider designation of "continuants", i.e. things which are identical with themselves in diversity of times. A physical object is a continuant identical with itself in that the collection of ideas by and through which we know it are seen not to vary in different times of observation. And for it to have an identity, the ideas must not vary. This is, as Locke remarks, more easily seen in the case of a "simple substance". "Let us suppose" he says in II.xxvii.4, "an atom, i.e. a continued body under one immutable superficies, existing in a determined time and place; it is evident that, considered in any instant of its existence, it is in that instant the same with itself ..... and so it must continue as long as its existence is continued; for so long it will be the same and no other." (In the light of the observations already made on Locke's general method, it might be as well to italicise the "let us suppose".) That is to say, if we suppose a continued body under one immutable superficies, then the ideas that constitute our experience of that body (even if our experience is confined to supposition or

imagining) must not vary in repetition of the experience, and these ideas must include, as we have seen at length before, such ideas as existence, extension, whatever quality "fills out" the extension, and minimal duration "within the moment", which are the minimum constituents of even an atom or a suppositious atom. Therefore it is clear that even the "simplest" thing we can experience as an object must have diversity in its constituents, and those constituents must remain stable for the body, however simple, to be identical with itself. Most things we experience as objects, however, are very far from simple; and, as above, even the greatest simplicity we can imagine involves diversity. In actual experience there is nothing that is simple. but that does not mean that what we do experience lacks identity; as Locke goes on to point out (II.xxvii.4), not only does the supposed atom have identity, but so also does any mass or group of "atoms". "In like manner, if two or more atoms be found joined together into the same mass, every one of these atoms will be the same, by the foregoing rule; and while they exist united together, the mass, consisting of the same atoms, must be the same mass, or the same body, let the parts be ever so differently jumbled." (Ibid). That is to say, there are things in our



experience which we regard and name as one, although they may be composed of a multitude of relative "simples" each having its own identity, e.g. a heap of marbles is regarded and named as "a heap", "one heap" of marbles, the marbles representing the "atoms" of Locke's hypothetical illustration above.<sup>1</sup> And that heap has its own identity as long as the constituent (relatively simple) parts are the same on repeated inspection of the heap, and the identity is not affected even if the constituent "simples" are, on different occasions, disposed in totally different spatial or other relations, one to another. But if some marbles are taken away, then the heap has lost its identity and is become another thing with another identity. The ground, then, of the identity of some kinds of continuant which we meet with in ordinary experience, is mere non-variation; and whether the continuant is as simple in structure as may be, within the limits noticed, or however complex it may be, this ground is sufficient. Just as in the case of the simplest conceivable object, its parts, i.e. existence,

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<sup>1</sup> This is quite a good example of one of Locke's "manners of speaking". That what he meant by an "atom", Locke very well knew and was at pains to point out, is insensible (inexperienceable), but he here uses "atom" and masses made up of "atoms" -- quite beyond perception even with the aid of microscopes and so on -- as a figurative way of illustrating his argument about the identity of things which are perceptible.

of course, we must read in the light of what we have already found about the relation of ideas to things. In a sense Locke is talking, here, about the identity of ideas, but eo facto he refers, as we have seen, to things. If the qualification about the connectedness of ideas and things were to be inserted every time, then his account (and this one) would be intolerably prolix. There are, then, in our ordinary experience, elements such that it is intelligible<sup>1</sup> to describe them, as Locke here does, as units containing within themselves diversity of parts, such parts having

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<sup>1</sup> If anyone is disposed to contend that we do not, in fact, have experience of such unities as identical and distinct one from another and from all other things, but that our experience is, in some sense other than of mere summation, a whole, or that every part of it is received as related to every other part, the answer is that this is not a "matter of fact" at all. Our experience is what it is: so much is "matter of fact"; but thereafter in assessing any account of experience, the assessment, I maintain, can only be in terms of intelligibility; either the account is intelligible or it is not, and it is so or is not so strictly in the sense that it either directs my attention to a recognisable part of my total consciousness, or it does not. In a sense, no one can tell me anything "about" my experience; I can only have my attention directed to something in it. If what Locke writes here directs me to something I can identify as being in my experience (the term being in no way confined to presentation in sensation alone) as it is, then his description is intelligible and good. Likewise, if someone talks of something as a settlement of Monads or as a Qualification of the Real, and by so doing directs me to some part of my experience which I can identify there "as being as it is", and which I may have failed to notice before, then his description is

each its own unity and being susceptible perhaps, in turn, to further analysis into yet simpler parts and so on down to that limit which we have noted more than once before, beyond which "simplicity" becomes meaningless. And to such things, recognised and named each as "one" thing, we can attribute continuins identity, provided that the constituent elements do not vary.

98. Not all continuants, however, are like this; nor is the identity of all continuants grounded in mere non-variation of parts. Not only do we meet in experience such continuants as a heap of marbles, or a fleet of ships, or those that are, as Locke says, the "most part of artificial things, at least such of them as are made up of distinct substances", but also we come upon continuaants such as those we designate "oak tree", "horse", or "man".

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intelligible and good; if my attention is not so directed, then the description is unintelligible and bad, and all it has done is to add to my experience by the amount of the images or concepts it gives rise to (in which case, if I retain any memory of them, there will be something in my experience, i.e. a memory of these, to which my attention could be directed by some other subsequent description; and this is called doing History of Philosophy).

99. On what grounds, then, do we attribute identity to such a continuant as an "oak tree"? Obviously enough not on the grounds that its parts do not vary, for, observably, they vary very frequently, almost from day to day if we observe that often. The sapling I may observe as a child is the "same" as the mature tree I may observe when I look again (with luck) seventy years later into the same corner of the garden; yet, as Locke suggests, every particle of matter in its constitution may have changed many times i.e. the simpler parts contained within the experienced unity in each case -- at the time of my childhood and in my old age -- may not have maintained that invariability of constituent which makes them self-identical. In the case of the heap of marbles, we saw that if some marbles were removed, the identity of the continuant was destroyed; but in this case, if a sizable branch is lopped off the tree and allowed to decay and ultimately disintegrate -- its constituents being, at the least, totally dispersed -- the identity of the tree is not thereby destroyed. The identity of such a continuant cannot, therefore, be as in the former case, the mere aggregation of non-variable parts. "The reason wherof is" as Locke succinctly says, "that, in these two cases -- a mass of matter and a living body -- identity is not applied to the same thing."

100. We find, then, that there is another sort of unity, containing parts, which must be accounted for in our experience. In the first sort of continuant we examined, it was sufficient, for it to have identity in duration, that there should be a one-to-one correspondence (so to speak) between the parts on successive observations and that, as in the case of the heap of marbles, the relations, spatial or otherwise, which the parts bore to each other in successive observations, were a matter of indifference; it was enough that they were the "same" parts. In this latter case, however, almost the opposite is the case; there need be no one-to-one correspondence between the parts on successive observations, provided the relations between such parts as are, remain stable i.e. at time  $T_i$  the "parts" of the continuant may be "a,b,c,d,....n" and at time  $T_{ii}$  they may be "x,y,z,....&" and, Locke suggests, provided that the parts, however diverse their identities at the different times, conform to the same "disposition" or "organisation", then the continuant is the "same thing" at time  $T_{ii}$  as it was at time  $T_i$ . Now, in the case of the oak tree, this arrangement or disposition is, according to Locke, such arrangement of the parts "as is fit to receive and distribute nourishment, so as to continue and



frame the wood, bark, and leaves etc. of an oak, in which consists the vegetable life." In other words, the ground of continued identity in this case is participation in a continuing life by changing, perhaps constantly changing, parts; and although Locke says that such an organisation (in such terms as above, in the case of the oak tree) is this continuing life, it might be safer to say that it is that by which we recognise the presence and exact location of such a continuing life. Recoiling from the positivistic implications of Locke's literal statement that the organisation "is that individual life", Campbell Fraser inserts a note on p.443 of his edition that "it is only in a loose sense that the 'organisation', which is visible, can be identified with the 'life' which is invisible", and although Fraser's alarm is understandable (being of the same sort as Stillingfleet's alarm over "thinking matter"), there is, I think, no reason to magnify this into a difficulty. Plainly enough, what Locke means is that where in experience we come upon the parts of a thing, revealed to us in the ideas of time, behaving in a certain way viz. maintaining a certain disposition, then we know we have some upon a continuant which is a living organism, vegetable or animal, and the disposition of the apprehended parts bears the same relation

to the living thing as each idea presented bears to the thing "of which" it is. This view is borne out, I think, by the immediately succeeding paragraph (II.xxvii.6.).

Here Locke says that the organism can be described by analogy with a watch. Such a machine as a watch is, like these organisms, a disposition of parts "to a certain end" which, provided with a sufficient force, achieves that end. But although they are similar -- and we may be instructed by their similarity -- in possessing such a disposition of parts (and if we can imagine the constituent atoms of the machine in change as constant as those of the organism appear to be, the analogy becomes closer), they are radically different in that "the fitness of the organisation and the motion wherein life consists, begin together" in the case of the organism, while in the case of the machine the force "comes sensibly from without." So, as far as the disposition of the parts alone is concerned (i.e. the "visible" of Fraser's note) there need be, in Locke's account, no distinction as between mechanism and organism. But a distinction is pointed; therefore Locke is not identifying the "life" and the "organisation". And the distinction, as I have suggested, is that the disposition of the parts of certain continuants indicates, or may do so, the locus of a live being in the

same way as ideas, simple or complex, indicate that of which they are. And this is borne out by experience to which, if questioned, Locke would doubtless appeal, even if in doing so he used the unfortunate and deceptive formula of "sending us to our senses". We do not normally confuse animals with machines<sup>1</sup> or machines with vegetables. We may attempt to persuade ourselves wilfully, by adopting as a priori some principle which is supposed to legislate for our experience, and may then say like, for example, some Cartesians, that we know that animals are merely complicated automata; but this has to be a late and sophisticated sort of "experience" superinduced upon an ordinary experience part of which is of "animals", which neither children nor honest men mistake for machines, or ever have done.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The fact that clever artificers like the Dr. Coppelius of Delibes' ballet, or King Pygmalion, or Madame Tussaud may temporarily deceive us, is no great objection.

<sup>2</sup> The substance of the note to para. 27 above applies in full here as it does at almost every point where a new topic in the Essay is examined; but to insert the qualifications contained in it into the text, as in the case of the qualifications about the connectedness of ideas and things, would make exposition impossible. They must nevertheless be borne in mind.

101. This paragraph 6 of II.xxvii has, however, a further interest for us although in a different respect. It seems to me to contain an excellent example of what I mean by Locke's ability to adopt a "manner of speaking" for the purposes of a public exposition. The example of a watch or clock is, par excellence, the figure used to expound the nature of anything in terms of a mechanistic analysis (see Collingwood "The Idea of Nature") and that was an analysis familiar enough to Locke and the group of friends he kept in mind while writing the Essay.<sup>1</sup> It is an analysis, the ultimate metaphysical context of which is the "atomic", "compositional" metaphysics of post-Galilean science -- which describes it well enough, whatever its antique derivations may have been. Yet here, with what seems to me remarkable virtuosity, Locke uses it -- a mechanistic mythology -- to describe i.e. draw our attention to, a part of our experience which is not amenable to that analysis, and uses it successfully. Here he wishes to draw

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<sup>1</sup> Cp. "The Epistle to the Reader": "If I have not the good luck to please, yet nobody ought to be offended with me. I plainly tell all my readers, except half a dozen, this Treatise was not at first intended for them; and therefore they need not be at the trouble to be of that number."

our attention to a part of our experience viz. our coming upon organisms as continuing identities; he does not find to hand an "organic" vocabulary devised for the purpose; consequently he takes a vocabulary with which he is familiar and with which he can assume his readers are familiar, and directs their attention by means of a mechanistic figure to a non-mechanistic fact. I suggest that this happens throughout the Essay (see para.95 above); that, in describing his experience, Locke "uses" whatever terms will, he has reason to believe, serve as intelligible i.e. will make us regard those parts of experience he is attending to, and usually he is satisfied if he thinks he has succeeded in that, without being put out if the description he has used to direct our attention to one part is not completely compatible with the description he has used to direct our attention to another. If he had found it possible to describe each part of experience in the same terms so that all the descriptions were compatible, then no doubt he would have done it. Apparently he found it was not so possible; and in this he is not alone. One consequence of this, of course, is that the attempt to reconcile the various accounts in the Essay so that they make a verbally coherent system is not only vexation of spirit but also vanity. And it is not



at all evident that this is so because Locke misdescribed what he experienced; it may very well be that what we experience is such and so diverse that its parts cannot be described in a set of verbalisations that are non-contradictory. So that the accounts in the Essay may, after all, be reconcilable at least in the sense that they are, precisely in their incompatibility, a good and continuous account of what we do experience -- the criterion of their mutual coherence being ~~experimental~~ <sup>EXPERIENTIAL</sup> and not linguistic. To urge, in criticism of Locke, that any continuous account of our experience must be internally coherent, is merely to say that we hold a curious and rigid set of superstitions about the nature and origin of language -- a sort of superstition that is as diffused in our day as it was in Locke's. Obviously enough what we experience is not, and cannot be, either "contradictory" or "non-contradictory"; what we experience is what it is. The fact that, being what it is, it cannot be described in compatible propositions within the syntactical structure of known languages, may be regrettable and very inconvenient, but it does not alter what we experience nor even tell us much "about" it -- beyond adding certain perhaps rather unnecessary feelings of irritation and frustration to its

content and telling us that it is awkward to verbalise; the latter being something we can learn as well from the dithyrambs of the poets as from the disputation of the logicians. The fact too that, from an admittedly different point of view, there seems reason to believe that vocalisation, not to speak of language, is a late and fortuitous biological development in certain species, might give us pause to think before joining in an immoderate veneration of the merely linguistic mysteries which, it appears, can so ecstasise their adepts that these aver that the order of our experience is subject to the order of language and, as one contemporary slogan goes, that "language hews out the facts". For, whatever facts these are that are hewn, they are assuredly not the "facts of experience" -- which it is one of the merits of Locke's Essay to point out.

102. I do not wish to suggest that Locke is explicit about this "use of" incompatible manners of speaking as a merely expository device -- although he hints at it in his remarks that he is not nice about words, and that he has often observed how many enquiries are spoiled by too much niceness about them -- nor, even, that he was fully conscious of all the incompatibilities which his critics have

industriously sorted. I do suggest that, by his practice, he shews that he realised that our experience is in no wise limited, bound, or altered by the sort of description we give of it or can give of it, and that accordingly, in describing it i.e. in leading our attention consecutively among its parts, he adopts whatever "sort of" description is most consonant with his limited objective at the moment -- the part or sort of part of experience -- in the hope that, attention having been directed, the understanding will apprehend what is what e.g. that an "organism" is not a "machine", even when it is described in terms of one; and provided that attention is so directed, the mutual compatibility of descriptions is a matter of indifference, since both (or all) of the descriptions are then justified by experience; and the assertion that experience is such that it never justifies two or more incompatible descriptions, is not the statement of a fact, but a presupposition commonly held by people who happen to have highly sophisticated linguistic habits. This interpretation provides us, too, with an explanation of Locke's genuine difficulty (for we have no reason to suppose him disingenuous) in seeing what his critics would be after, and his frequent complaints that he cannot see "wherein they differ" from him by using merely

different words. We might try to put it by saying that his expository method is ostensive, and that sometimes he points with his thumb, sometimes with his head, and sometimes with his toes; and provided that in each case we identify the object of the ostentation, we should not complain that he does not point with his whole body (were that possible) every time, e.g. that part of our experience which is constituted by our entertaining the notion of substance is such (see para.92 above) that it is to be described as, both and simultaneously, given "in" simple ideas (thumb-pointing), and as a complex idea derived from series of simple ideas (toe-pointing), and this part of our experience is presented simultaneously in two different ways for each of which he has found an appropriate description, even if we are tempted, from a lingering prejudice in favour of verbal compatibility, to say that they are at "different levels". One of the general implications of the Essay seems to me to be that if the world we experience is not, or is not readily, to be described consistently, then at least we have learnt a little about it viz. that it is like that in despite of whatever desires we may have for a more elegant one. Consequently, in returning to a minuter exposition of Locke's views, we should be prepared, on finding incompatibility, not so much to do violence to the text in



trying to make the parts fit neatly together, as to re-examine and appeal to the experience to which Locke is directing our attention, to see whether the elements that are incompatibly described are, in fact, there -- as, I think, we shall find is the case with experience of the Self.

103. To revert, now, to organisms as identities: Locke has shewn us that certain continuants are identical continuants in that these things which constitute their parts, although not themselves identical in duration, being in constant change and development, co-operate in an unchanging function which is the maintenance of the sort of life we recognise in plants and animals. Now, among these continuants we meet of the animal sort, there is a species which we call Man, a species whose parts are organised so that they indicate at least the same sort of continued life as is indicated by the disposition of the parts of cows, mice, and monkeys. We should, then, be in a position to establish what is the ground of the identity of a man -- in so far as he is a member of the animal kingdom i.e. is that sort of continuant. And with the consideration of the identity of the "same man", we seem to be getting within



measurable distance of the main topic, Personal Identity. But the identity of the "same man" is not necessarily a "personal" identity. For what, Locke asks, do we indicate by the term "man"? Surely, he maintains, "man" is the term annexed to those ideas which exhibit in their concatenation an animal disposition. Man is essentially a physical thing, a body. If we see a body, like our own, we say "here is a man" although that body may be to all observation devoid of the habits and behaviour which we generally take to be the symptoms of rationality and the sort of sensibility we ourselves possess. It is, indeed, only in a developed and self-conscious state that we are tempted to deny the name, for example, to a moron or something otherwise so monstrous that we are cut off from imaginative sympathy with what we infer are its experiences. Contrarily, if we come upon a body in all "physical" respects different from that of our own and of those other continuants in our experience which we unhesitatingly call men -- which has, for example, wings for legs, a beak where men have mouths, and a tail or talons -- which, nevertheless, exhibits the symptoms of a rationality and feeling such as that we experience in ourselves, we do not, for that reason, say "this is a man". And this point Locke illustrates at length

by the celebrated anecdote of Prince Maurice and the Parrot -- the only part of the Essay, according to Dugald Stewart, of which many readers retained any distinct recollection! "Man" is, therefore, a biological or even zoological term referring to a species of organism having sufficient differentia other than rationality to separate it off from other bipeds. If this is not so, Locke suggests, and if "man" is to refer other than loosely and by synecdoche to what we more properly call "a person", then it will be hard "to make an embryo, one of years, mad and sober, the same man, by any supposition, that will not make it possible for Seth, Ismael, Socrates, Pilate, St. Austin, and Caesar Borgia, to be the same man." (II.xxvii.7). In other words, if the ground of a man's identity is to be located beyond his body, in, for example, continuance of spiritual substance or of the Soul, then the uncertainty remarked above enters into the attribution of identity; for, says Locke, the soul of Heliogabalus embodied in a hog, is not the man Heliogabalus. A "man's body" may always be, and may necessarily be, the locus of a "person" -- in so far as that refers to "human persons", for Locke never excludes the possibility of rational beings other than human rational beings --, but that does not in itself locate the identity of the person

in the continuance of the parts of that body, nor the identity of the body itself in the continued identity of the person. "Man", the body, has its own identity and that identity must always be of "body and shape" whatever other concomitants are normally present with it e.g. sensitivity and rationality. The identity of a man, in brief, is the identity of an animal without regard to what else in the way of soul or personality may inhabit or use the "man". A man is that sort of continuant which is an organic identity.

104. This account of the identity of a man as distinct from a person, leads Locke to the first enunciation of one of the most striking general doctrines of the Essay -- that one which is succinctly expressed in his own words in II.xxvii.8: "It is not therefore unity of substance that comprehends all sorts of identity, or will determine it in every case." As we have already seen, the identity of a man is not concerned with the identity of a single spiritual substance; it may be connected with the identity of material or physical substance -- namely that which the ideas that go to make up the man indicate to us. But even so, in the case of all organic identities, including "man", this material substance cannot be the same "identical" substance

conscious mind -- and how little he was in fact hobbled and blinkered by inherited and uncriticised metaphysical categories, as even his otherwise most intelligent critics would sometimes have use believe; for, particularly with reference to the conscious subject itself, this separation of identity from single (simple) substances goes contrary to the categories of previous thinking which formulated the very language Locke uses to elude them.



V.

THE ACCOUNT OF PERSONAL IDENTITY IN BOOK II EXAMINED IN  
RELATION TO LOCKE'S THEORY OF MEMORY.

105. We may properly start the consideration of Locke's most sustained and elaborate account of personal identity by repeating his assertion that it is "one thing to be the same substance, another the same man, and a third the same person", and then going on to notice that he starts his main account in II.xxvii.11 characteristically with a round assertion in ordinarily intelligible terms of what a "person" is. viz. "a thinking intelligent being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing, in different times and places.....", and thereafter goes on to elaborate the triple distinction noted above by adopting in turn a series of suppositious alternatives, each clothed in its appropriate terminology, which by their pointing in a common direction, both in a positive and a negative sense, narrow our attention to what it is in experience we name by such names as "self" or "person", rather in the way an artillerist "brackets" onto



his target -- in this case, that in experience which is to be described as "experience of our selves" -- by a succession of fairly deliberate near misses in its vicinity.

106. Of the ground of the third sort of identity, that of the "same person", Locke gives in his preliminary account here, a summary statement. And it is that this ground is "consciousness" which is, he says, "inseparable from thinking and, as it seems to me, essential to it...." (ibid). Consciousness is, in fact, the invariable concomitant of every perception and volition (the two most general designations in Locke's phenomenology) and it is in consciousness that "everyone is to himself that which he calls self." Therefore, Locke goes on, "since consciousness always accompanies thinking, and it is that which makes every one to be what he calls self, and thereby distinguishes himself from all other thinking things, in this alone consists personal identity..... and as far as this consciousness can be extended backwards to any past action or thought, so far reaches the identity of that person."

107. That these views are unorthodox and, in some of

their implication, somewhat alarming, Locke is well aware e.g. II.xxvii.27: "I am apt enough to think I have, in treating of this subject, made some suppositions that will look strange to some readers, and possibly they are so in themselves", and they led, as a matter of history, to an outburst of eminently unphilosophical abuse (unphilosophical both in its tone and in the mere technical ineptitude of the authors) which is the matter of the comment by T.E. Webb with which I prefaced the main text of this thesis. It was probably an awareness of the startling and uncongenial nature of his description which led Locke to the extreme elaboration of the remainder of his exposition which is, in effect, an examination of the question: "If this is not so, what are the alternatives, and do the alternatives properly describe what we experience?"

108. If the ground of a person's identity is not continuing consciousness, what, indeed, are the alternatives?

The first alternative, and the one most congenial to the prevalent metaphysics of his age from which Locke is commonly supposed to have been unable to disentangle himself, is that the ground of personal identity, and of

every other sort of identity, is one continuing individual substance -- in this case qualified as "spiritual". But we have already seen that Locke rejects outright the doctrine that all identity is grounded in invariability of substance in, for example, his description of organic identity. Identity grounded in invariability of substance, indeed, can on his explicit view be attributed only to a rather hypothetical sort of "atom" or to objects that are numerically absolutely stable colligations of such atoms; and as far as our ordinary experience of identities goes, Locke is clear that we have no experience of such "atoms" at all (they are "insensible") and the number of their colligations which are absolutely stable -- or which we could be sure are so -- is not large. And here, in the examination of personal identity, Locke proceeds to underline his rejection of this doctrine already so strikingly made in the description of organic continuants; which sufficiently, I think, demonstrates that his break with the metaphysics of the Schools was real and that a large part of the apparent stultification due to the influence of it, which certain scholars purport to find, is in fact only his practice of making do with the terms appropriate to it for lack of a convenient set of existing alternatives, and for

the sake of his less originally minded (or less observant) readers.<sup>1</sup>

109. Now if, as many people would have it -- both among Locke's contemporaries and among those later adherents of the theory we called the "pure Ego" theory in the introduction -- the Self is some individual continuing existent thing or substance, then, as Locke points out in II.xxvii.10a,<sup>2</sup> a difficulty is immediately presented by any break in the continuity of consciousness: "..... if these perceptions, with their consciousness, always remained present to the mind, whereby the same thinking thing would be always consciously present, and, as would be thought evidently the same to itself ...", then, says Locke, it would doubtless be possible and proper to describe the Self as such a single, continuing substance. And this rather difficult

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<sup>1</sup> For evidence that Locke is prepared rather to adapt an existing vocabulary than to invent new words, see his reply to Edward Stillingfleet's remark that he (Stillingfleet) is "utterly against any private mint of words", in "Mr. Locke's Reply to the Rt. Rev. the Lord Bishop of Worcester's Answer to his Second Letter". (Works. 12th Ed. Vol.IV.)

<sup>2</sup> In Campbell Fraser's edition of the "Essay" the paragraphs in this chapter are wrongly numbered, "10" and "11" being repeated. Since this edition is the most convenient to use, I have simply numbered the second "10" and "11" as 10a and 11a in my copy.



statement means that if, in fact, our consciousness were a continuous and ever concrescent stream of ideas occurring in groups one after another in an open series of specious presents, and being retained memorially as additions to each successive such specious present -- so that all our past experience is present to us in each succeeding moment of consciousness -- then, we might be able to describe our Selves as that spiritual substance which is revealed through the having present of such a complex and ever swelling stream of ideas: for, that spiritual substance is revealed in such ideas, is already admitted; because consciousness is that which accompanies every perception and volition i.e. if we perceive or will, we know that we do so, and our knowing that we do so involves us in having those ideas of reflection whose objects are precisely these perceptions and willings as such, and, as we saw in para.89 above, one of the minimum concomitants of all ideas of reflection is an awareness of the contained or underlying spiritual substance revealed in and through them. And since, if our experience were indeed like this, all our "past" i.e. all former ideas we have ever had would, in all their excessive number and complexity, be re-presented in each present, that spiritual substance revealed as a minimal concomitant of the



idea of reflection whose object would be our preception of them all at once in their complexity, would presumably be the same "identical" substance. But, as Locke points out, our experience is not like that, nor in fact anything at all like it. Sometimes we sleep deeply, thereby interrupting the stream of consciousness for a greater or less period, and have no ideas "or at least none with that consciousness which remarks our waking thought." (ibid). Sometimes we are absorbed in some limited part of what is presented to us so that we are for the time quite oblivious of our recent and remoter past, and so on. So that our experience is, in fact, of a series of longer or shorter intervals of consciousness, the contents of which are diverse and of very varying complexity; and this means that although spiritual substance may be revealed in each interval of consciousness or in each successive state therein, there is no certainty that in each case the spiritual substance is the same identical substance. Let us suppose, for example, that the contents of two intervals of consciousness is represented by the series firstly "1,2,3,4,5,.....0" and secondly "a,b,c,d,e,.....n", and further that, as not only well may be, but certainly frequently is, the case, neither series has any one unit in common with the other, then

although the constitutive ideas of each series may severally and together reveal spiritual substance, unless the consciousness is expanded so that both series are included, it is obviously impossible to assert that the substances revealed by the constituent ideas of the two series are the identical substance. They might, per accidens, be so; but that is something we could never know unless the consciousness were so expanded -- as of course it might be, in the sense that a later interval of consciousness might include, in its constitutive ideas, memorial representations of the order "1,a,2,b,3,c,4,d,... ..On" together with other presented ideas indigenous to such a third interval of consciousness itself. But until we can with honesty assert that our experience at any time consists of a super-series of ideas which exhaustively included every constitutive idea of every other previous interval of consciousness marked off from its fellows by a drowsy nod or diminution or concentration of attention, we must yield Locke the point that description of what we experience as our Selves is not properly achieved by asserting the continued existence of a single substance underlying that experience, and the further point that whether the successive stages of conscious experience are

underlain by the same substance or different substances "concerns not personal identity at all". The point is perhaps to be made again that Locke never denies that it is possible that the conscious experience of any one "person" is underlain by one single substance; his point is that as far as what ordinarily we experience of our Selves goes, the matter is so uncertain that to assert that we do actually experience the continuation of such a single substance is plainly wrong, and that the hypothesis itself, whether "reasonable" or "unreasonable", is so little justified by what we do have in the way of continuity of consciousness (which is also a relative discontinuity) that its entertainment is quite irrelevant to an account of the grounds of personal identity as we do, and can only, know it.

110. This, then, is one argument why we must locate identity of person in continuity of consciousness and not in invariability of substance. Further to it, we should note that Locke says, II.xxvii.10a: "For it is by the consciousness it. (any intelligent being) has of its present thoughts and actions, that it is self to itself now, and so will be the same self, as far as the same consciousness

can extend to actions past or to come<sup>1</sup>", and again at II.xxvii.17: "That with which the consciousness of this present thinking thing can join itself (Locke's italic), makes the same person, and is one self with it, and with nothing else; and so attributes to itself, and owns all the actions of that thing, as its own, as far as that consciousness reaches, and no further.", for these passages contain a qualification which, however obvious to common sense, could have damaging "philosophical" consequences if it were ignored or denied. The consciousness of personal identity in any "Here and Now" is coeval with the consciousness of whatever objects are the content of that "Here and Now", and these may well include the retained or revived consciousness of objects which were the content of some other "Here and Now" which is now a "Then", but this does not mean that the consciousness which is the ground and medium of our knowing our Selves is confined to the content -- which may or may not include retained or revived contents of few or many previous moments of consciousness -- of any particular "Here and Now", nor that there is an unique

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<sup>1</sup> The rare and only partially investigated phenomena of pre-cognition are in point here, but I wish to remark in this connection only that the discussion of their relation to the problem of Personal Identity would probably be a sort of "mirror image" of the discussions to be unfolded here.

"Here and Now" whose content includes the revived and retained content of every previous moment of consciousness, as in the hypothetical example we worked out above, but on the contrary, as Locke here tells us, it means that so far from being the consciousness of one particular moment in which we actually do experience something, it is whatever consciousness we can achieve of things of which we have, in fact, previously been conscious and which sometimes we "remember" and sometimes we do not. If this is not so, then we are saying that Locke denies us memory, and this he does not do in any of his accounts. Our experience, Locke is saying, is such that our successive intervals of consciousness contain, among other presentations, diverse contents "as memorially qualified" which, in the case of different units of the successive series, <sup>d</sup>exclude each other to a greater or less degree, and no unit of any series contains all the possible content which we may have as "memorially qualified". In brief, then, that consciousness in terms of which we know Selves as relations of identity between terms which are, in each case, a then-Self and a Now-Self is not, or not only, the actual consciousness of any moment as "now" (i.e. that in which any intelligent being "is self to itself now"), but is also the potential consciousness



which is very variously actualised by the supervention of the phenomenon which we call "remembering".

111. This view, as I have remarked, is not repugnant at least to common sense; objections nevertheless can be made to it. And the most relevant of these are:-

- i. (Note: the answer to this first objection is only partially anticipated in the previous para.)

Personal identity cannot be grounded in the actual consciousness persisting in any one moment, because if that were so, then "I" am not the same person as I was on this day of the month ten years ago, unless I am remembering that of which I was conscious at that previous time.

- ii. Personal identity cannot be grounded in the potential consciousness which, when actualised, might have as part of it, anything of the extended series of things of which "I have been" conscious, because if that were so, then there is, in fact, no ground of identity, because until the potentiality is actualised there is no certainty that the relation between the "now" element in the actualisation and the "then" element, is one of "identity", nor, even when it is actualised, that the ideas which are actualised as the "then"-terminal of the relationship may not be those annexed to some different "person" i.e. may not

have been related to a different "now"-terminal in a relation which formerly occurred; nor that the ideas which are actualised as the "then"-terminal of a relation in a present moment of consciousness may not have been, when they first occurred in the past, those that constituted a "now"-terminal which, in that past moment of consciousness, was related to a further "then"-terminal consisting of ideas which are no part of the potential consciousness of the Self whose ideas constitute the "now"-terminal of the present moment of consciousness; nor that the ideas which might be actualised as the "then" element might not simultaneously have as their related "now"-terminal other ideas (i.e. those annexed to "another person") not included in the series of the first mentioned "now"-terminal. In other words, one person might be indistinguishable from another.

iii. Personal identity cannot have, as its joint grounds, such actual and potential consciousness; because if it is consciousness "which makes every one to be what he calls self, and thereby distinguishes himself from all other thinking things", then the Self "creates itself" -- and does so ever anew in each moment of consciousness, so that the content of that Self never has elements of such a kind that between them the required relation can be asserted. And

this is so because, when any potential object of consciousness (of the required sort) becomes actualised, the mere fact of its actualisation in consciousness makes it to be one with the remaining contents of the consciousness which form the context of its actualisation, and whether or not it is properly, in the sense required, a "then"-terminal in a relationship with the remaining elements of its context (the "now"-terminal), the mere inclusion of it in consciousness makes it a part of the particular actual moment of consciousness in which it occurs, which involves an "I" whose consciousness it is, and the resulting relation between it and the "now"-terminal does ~~not~~ constitute a revelation or discovery of Self through memory, but a creation of Self in the present. In other words, consciousness creates the Self or "I" by "thinking itself I". And the objection to this is that Locke does not seem, on the face of it, to want to suggest that the "I" creates itself by "thinking about I".

This objection -- which is by no means a negligible one -- can usefully be expressed in another way viz. if it is asserted that any two ideas in consciousness are in the relation of identity as between a "then"-terminal and a "now"-terminal in one personal consciousness, then there is no possible way in which I, if it is my consciousness, or

anyone else, can test this proposition, because my "being I" (my being myself) consists, for that moment, precisely in my making or entertaining it. So that any occurrence of such a relation between two or more ideas by its mere occurrence creates a new self which is quite independant of the nature or origin of the terms of the relation or of whether or not they are, in fact, related as units in the series of the successive perceptions of any one person, which, on the other hand, would necessarily have to be the case if personal identity were to be grounded in consciousness.

112. The first two of these objections are those which Berkeley actually makes, or at least indicates, in an entry in his Commonplace Book (Works. Cpb1. Fras. Vol.IV -- also quoted by Campbell Fraser in his edition p.449), and the third represents a line of thought which was later developed positively in some post-Kantian German philosophies and their derivatives (e.g. James Ferrier's, as in his "Institutes of Metaphysic" -- sic -- particularly in Props.i - iii - ix.). But that they are not legitimate extensions from Locke's description of what we experience of Personal Identity, but are distortions of it, we can see as follows:

ia. The first objection can be dealt with in a short



way by pointing out that it ignores what has already been demonstrated viz. that Locke does not confine the ground of personal identity to the actual consciousness persisting in any one moment, but includes in it potential consciousness in the form of memory; so that even if I am not now at this moment conscious of what and how I was conscious on this day of the month ten years ago, I am still the same person as I was then in that it is possible for me to recollect something of my consciousness at that time. The only relevance the objection can then have is when it takes the form of admitting that "it is by the consciousness it (an intelligent being) has of its present thoughts and actions, that it is self to itself now", but denying that we have such potential consciousness in the form of memory of ideas which can be revived although they may not be so. And this might, I suppose, take the form of a view, somewhat like that of the third objection, that the occurrence of apparently "memorial" ideas is in fact the occurrence of novel ideas with a quite illusory apparent reference to the past, or of a view that there are some ideas which cannot be revived, or things that cannot be remembered. And to deal with the objection of Locke's account of memory which, being of the first importance to the whole of the present



exposition, would have had to be undertaken sooner or later.

113. We find that what is perhaps Locke's most interesting statement of his views on memory is not, as might have been expected, in chapter x. of II "Of Retention", but is embedded in the polemic against innate ideas in Book I., and I propose to quote extensively from this passage I.iii.21. In the course of his contention that any ideas which the mind does not actually think about (e.g. "innate" ideas) must be lodged in the memory, if they exist at all, Locke gives the following account of the memory in which they may be lodged; ideas "must be known, when they are remembered, to have been perceptions in the mind before; unless remembrance can be without remembrance. For to remember is to perceive ..... with a consciousness that it was perceived or known before. Without this, whatever idea comes into the mind is new, and not remembered; this consciousness of its having been in the mind before, being that which distinguishes remembering from all other ways of thinking." He goes on to remark that any idea "having been an actual perception, is so in the mind that, by the memory, it can be made an actual perception again." And, again, iterating the special distinction of this mode of consciousness, he says:

"Whenever the memory brings any idea into actual view, it is with a consciousness that it had been there before, and was not wholly a stranger to the mind. Whether this be not so, I appeal to every one's observation." Again: "... without which consciousness of a former perception there is no remembrance; and whatever idea comes into the mind without that consciousness is not remembered....." Somewhat further on in the same passage he asserts: "..... if it (an idea) be in the memory, it cannot by the memory be brought into actual view without a perception that it comes out of the memory; which is this, that it had been known before, and is now remembered." Again: "..... if they be in the memory they can be revived without any impression from without; and whenever they are brought into the mind ..... they bring with them a perception of their not being wholly new to it. This being a constant and distinguishing difference between what is, and what is not in the memory ..... and what is in the memory ... appears not to be new, but the mind finds it in itself, and knows it was there before."

114. One of the advantages of this particular exposition of Locke's, besides its relative compactness and precision, is that it avoids some vicious metaphors that occur in his

later version -- metaphors that are vicious in that they <sup>have</sup> failed in their purpose of directing the attention of some of his readers (not perhaps the most discerning among them) to what is the content of their experience, but have instead misdirected it and misled them. When in II.x. he comes to treat of memory in a chapter on the faculty of retention, Locke remarks that the way of retention that the mind has other than contemplation of an idea continued through some perceptible duration from its reception, "is the power to revive again in our minds those ideas which, after imprinting have disappeared, or have been as it were laid aside out of sight." (It is a pity that the "as it were" is not italicised in the text.) And this power, he goes on to say, "is memory, which is as it were the storehouse of our ideas." (Again we are to note the explicit qualification "as it were".) But by the time he came to prepare the second edition he found it necessary to correct his metaphors, for the sake of those who would not attend to the "as it weres", by inserting this: "But, our ideas being nothing but actual perceptions in the mind ..... this laying up of our ideas ..... signifies no more but this ..... that the mind has a power ..... to revive perceptions which it has once had, with this additional perception annexed to them, that it has had them before." Now, from these quotations, and



particularly from those parts of them I have italicised, it appears that, in terms of our present interpretation of Locke's phenomenology, the situation is this: there are in our experience elements such that they can be intelligibly described as things (or ideas) "remembered"; and these phenomena, like all others, are ideas, either simple or complex; but whether simple or complex they always have, as we have found, certain minimal concomitants, or perhaps it would be better to say that these simple ideas which are perceived, or in this case, "remembered", either as single or as parts of more complex ideas, are always "groups of" concomitants which are not extricable one from another beyond a certain minimum limit which, as far as ordinary immediate presentation goes, consists in the compresence of Existence, Extension and/or Duration, a Content specific in being the content of that particular idea but of variable nature, and, in certain cases, Substantiality of one kind or the other: Locke is now saying that, apart from the limit set by the minimal concomitants of anything immediately presented, there is another limit applicable only to certain phenomena -- i.e. "ideas remembered" -- and it is a limit different from the former by the addition of a further minimal concomitant, variously described in the quotations

above, for which we might use the phrase "memorial qualification". For an idea to be remembered (i.e. for "remembrance to be remembrance") it must have this qualification; if it does not have it, then it is not a remembered idea, but a novel one. And once again his description seems admirably just to me. Such phenomena, in other words, do occur. And, since this is so, we can perceive a relation within the content of an actual moment of consciousness as between ideas subject to this perceived qualification which are (by the memorial qualification) "then"-terminals and other "present" ideas, which is a relation of identity (in certain respects), so that, in fact, we do have experience of a continuing consciousness of the sort the objection we are now considering purports to deny. (If questions are raised at this point as to whether such a relation is indeed, or must be, one of "identity", I must ask them to be reserved until the matter is more fully explicated in its place in paras 123-125 below.) Personal identity, then, is to be grounded in a consciousness extended to whatever it can apprehend, and among the things it patently can apprehend are "remembered ideas" -- in the sense described.<sup>1</sup> Of

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<sup>1</sup> We must try to keep constantly in mind how Locke uses "idea" -- as distinct from any way in which his successors may have used it -- viz. as referring to whatever, at all discriminable, we are conscious of.



subsidiary objections to Locke's theory of memory itself, those of his contemporary Norris which provoked him to add to the text, are not important. They consist in seizing on the metaphors in II.x. with a complete indifference to the repeated "as it weres". If there is a "storehouse" for ideas which can be brought out from memory, why, it is asked, is there not a storehouse for "innate" ideas. But Locke is not asserting that there is an actual repository where the ideas while unremembered "go on existing". In none of his manners of speaking does he try to describe the mind as an actual extended thing which could be compartmented. (Even if mind were "thinking matter", it does not follow that the "thinking" would be extended like the "matter" -- it might be, as indeed Locke suggests in another place, an organic "function".) His use of such terms as "storehouse", "laid aside", "out of sight", "bring in sight", "repository", and of all that is suggested by such words in his account as "retention, revive, repetition, reproduction, return, renew, recognise, refresh", where the prefix "re" transfers the referent invariably into a mode, the essential mark of which is an immediately apprehended "once-then-and-again-now", which is the controlling concept underlying all these metaphors of Locke's is plainly enough an attempt to draw our attention

to a specific qualification which "innate" ideas (if there are any) would not possess, since they are supposed to be essentially what is not remembered.<sup>1</sup> (What could be remembered in relation to "innate" ideas, would presumably be the occurrence of an innate idea -- or an instance of the operation of an innate principle, but that would be, in any case, a perfectly reputable "memory" in its own right.) The "neatness" which Professor Aaron purports to find in this criticism, which is a naive and literal misinterpretation of what Locke goes out of his way to emphasise are metaphors, is something which I confess eludes me.

115. Professor Aaron's own criticism, however, may be a different matter (op.cit. pp.129-130). Locke, says Professor Aaron, lays aside the "'repository' theory" as he calls it (which means no more than that Locke tries in the second edition to make it even clearer, if possible, that his metaphors are indeed metaphors) and regards each instance of memory as a new fresh perception. It may not be unduly pedantic to point out that Locke does nothing of the kind, and that he has already made it quite clear in the

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<sup>1</sup> Cp. the whole argument of Book I.

first edition text of Book I. that each instance of memory is a "new fresh perception".<sup>1</sup> However, this, Professor Aaron agrees, does away with Norris's "difficulty" as to the "whereabouts of" ideas when they are not actually remembered; but leaves, he thinks, an equal difficulty of distinguishing between perceiving and remembering. There is, of course, no such difficulty. An appeal to observation -- which Locke bids us make -- reveals that certain phenomena in our experience have, as one of their minimal concomitants, a qualification which distinguishes them from others, so that we can intelligibly call the first kind "memories" and the second kind "perceptions". "This being" as Locke says, "a constant and distinguishing difference between what is, and what is not in the memory", and again is "that which distinguishes remembering from all other ways of thinking" -- including "perceiving". And we do make a distinction in these terms in every moment almost of our waking lives. If any of the ideas we have do not have this distinction then they are not memories, nor do we call them such, but are perceptions; but, be it noted, if none of our ideas

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<sup>1</sup> Professor Aaron himself refers to these important passages in Book I at another point in his exposition, but gives the reference wrongly as I.iv.20 -- there being no such paragraph in the "Essay".

have this qualification i.e., if it is, as Professor Aaron maintains, impossible to distinguish between perceiving and remembering in terms of Locke's account, then, appealing to our findings of some time ago in paras 55-57 above, we must point out that we would not be conscious at all (and we are), because even in the perception of the identity of an idea with itself, i.e. of an idea as a new psychic occurrence of which we are conscious, with its apprehended content within the minimum of duration which has to be the specious present if consciousness is to continue, there is involved the recollection, admittedly over a brief gap, of one of the presented terms of that relation of identity. And as we remain recalcitrantly conscious over relatively long intervals, it is purposeless to deny that the distinguishing qualification is experienced. Professor Aaron is determined, however, that the grounds of the distinction are insufficient; because "we frequently perceive something we have perceived before, and remember to have perceived before, and yet this particular perception is not itself an instance of memory." Now, I confess that I find this statement of Professor Aaron's baffling in respect of any relation it can bear to Locke's theory of memory. How much does he include in "this particular perception ..... itself"? And

if the now-perceiving of a thing occurs in a situation which is also a remembering of having seen the thing before, what is it, if it is not the "now"-terminal of the relation which constitutes the instance of remembering, on Locke's account? After all the essence of a memorial situation is that it is bi-polar. Memory involves the present just as much as the past "if remembrance is to be remembrance."

It may be that what Professor Aaron is trying to get at is this: sometimes we perceive something i.e. have as one of the presented phenomena of a given moment of consciousness, an idea which is without the distinguishing memorial qualification which Locke draws our attention to, and then very soon after in a subsequent moment of consciousness which continues to include that "perception", we "remember" that "this" we have seen before i.e. there is now added to the phenomena presented, the distinguishing memorial qualification (which, as discriminable within consciousness, is itself an "idea"). But surely I can and do distinguish between the phenomenon which is the object (idea) under its "presentational qualification" and the phenomenon which is the object under its "memorial qualification", both qualifications being, I maintain, in Locke's usage of the word "idea". Suppose that the perception I have in the first



instance is a visual image which is presented to me, in that moment, as "novel", and then very soon thereafter I "remember" that I have "seen it before", and have the additional idea involved in that presented to me together with the continuing idea-of-sensation "of seeing it"; these "ideas" (or "ideal qualifications" if that is any clearer -- they are still phenomena, i.e. "Lockean" ideas) are distinguishable in the latter case, but that does not involve me in "seeing two visual images" -- one "as perceived" and a fainter copy sitting alongside "as remembered". The sensual content of the idea certainly remains unchanged during the original perception and subsequent (or for that matter simultaneous) remembering, but that does not mean that the perception of the sensual content and the remembering of the same sensual content are indistinguishable, or that the sensual content is not simultaneously qualified "presentationally" and "memorially", so that because the sensual content does remain stable, I cannot see and remember it at the same time, or that it, as a present perception to me now, is not the nearer end of an instance of memory. To say that it does mean that, is to be involved in giving an almost incredibly crude reading of what Locke means by "ideas", and one which we can only hope Professor Aaron

does not assent to -- viz, a reading that they "are all little pictures".

116. Now if, from this, we take it that Locke's theory of memory itself is freed of these objections, we can properly conclude that, in terms of his account, the first formulation of the objection we are considering is invalid -- and the argument towards this has had to be rehearsed at length because of the necessary examination of the theory of memory so far. It is clearly invalid because Locke's account consists in his drawing our attention to the fact that, in our experience, consciousness does (a fortiori "can") extend to ideas which we have had before, and also that we know that they are ideas we have had before because of something given with certain ideas viz. one of their minimal concomitants (memorial qualification) which, as we can see on a moment's reflection, must be present if consciousness of any kind is to continue -- and it does. And if the objector takes refuge in saying that this which is so given may still be "illusion", then the answer is that, in that case, so is everything else in our experience, and if all experience is uniformly illusory (whatever that could mean) the final answer deserved would be no more than the

eristic quip that if all is a dream, then that is of no consequence at all, provided we never wake up.

117. There remains, however, the other formulation of the objection that even if our consciousness can so include some of "our own" past ideas, and we can thereby know some parts of what constitutes our own identity through such an extended consciousness, it may still perhaps be the case that there are past ideas which cannot be so revived; so that, for example, if the ideas which constitute what was my consciousness exactly a decade ago cannot be revived, then I am not the same person (and can never be) as that which was conscious exactly a decade ago.

118. In starting to deal with this form of the objection to Locke's doctrine that continuity of consciousness is the ground of personal identity, it may be as well to have a look at what he has to say about the circumstances in which those ideas which can be revived are in fact normally revived, to see if there is perhaps any reason to be found why, counter to the objection, it is the case that all past ideas can be so revived. In II.xxvii.23. Locke makes, on this point, the general observation that "the mind many

times recovers the memory of past consciousness, which it had lost for twenty years together." And, reverting to x. of II. we find that in drawing our attention to the sort of situation in which this may occur, he says that "the appearance of these dormant pictures" depends "sometimes on the will." And goes on: "The mind very often sets itself on work in search of some hidden idea, and turns as it were the eye of the soul upon it...." And that is one sort of situation in which ideas can be revived. But, on the other hand, "sometimes too they start up in our minds of their own accord ..... and very often are roused and tumbled out ..... by turbulent and tempestuous passions." The situations, then, in which ideas are liable to recur may or may not be influenced by the volition of the subject, and in connection with his last point that strong emotion is a frequent contributory to their reappearance, we may also note that he says at II.xxvii.10 that ideas may be fixed in the memory i.e. may be readily capable of revival, when they are those "which naturally at first make the deepest and most lasting impressions ..... those which are accompanied with pleasure or pain." Readiness to be revived is also, he observes subsequently, ensured by frequent repetition in the ordinary way of experience. So

that, it seems, the sort of ideas that can be revived include, among others, those that we wilfully try to reproduce -- in the example we took this might mean that, having some belief that I was ten years ago the same person as I am now, I may make an effort to recall what I was conscious of then, and may or may not succeed -- or, again, I may in the present have an experience of unusual and intensely emotional nature which, without effort on my part, may revive a memory of that day ten years ago by reason of some similarity or other connectedness in the consciousness on the two occasions. And this, of course, does happen. Again, on that past day I may have had an intensely painful experience which, although its memory may be suppressed according to some principle of psychic self-preservation, remains ready to obtrude itself upon my consciousness from time to time; and this, again, is observably quite common.

119. It might be said that none of this information Locke gives us is very remarkable, but that that is so arises only from the fact that it is both accurate and commonplace, which, in Locke's opinion and in mine, makes it good evidence. Certainly there is nothing in it which



would persuade us that it is necessarily true that all ideas can be revived, but such accurate and easily verifiable observations as Locke does make do, I think, shift the balance of the probability to the side that all ideas can be revived, and leaves the onus probandi that they cannot, very much with the objector.

120. On the other hand, Locke is very clear that some ideas can and do become utterly lost. In II.x.4. he writes that ideas can "quickly fade, and often vanish quite out of the understanding, leaving no more footsteps or remaining characters of themselves than shadows do flying over fields of corn." And among the situations in which this can occur, he catalogues lack of attention in the moment when the ideas occur, states of the bodily organs, and disease, such as fevers which can "in a few days calcine all those images to dust and confusion, which seemed to be as lasting as if graved in marble", and mere non-repetition whose fatal effect he describes in a passage of startling eloquence: "Thus the ideas, as well as children, of our youth often die before us; and our minds represent to us those tombs to which we are approaching; where, though the brass and marble

remain, yet the inscriptions are effaced by time, and the imagery moulders away. The pictures drawn in our minds are laid in fading colours; and if not sometimes refreshed, vanish and disappear." Finally, that ideas can be lost, is plainly stated in para.8 of the same chapter, when he writes that the memory sometimes "loses the idea quite, and so far it produces perfect ignorance. For, since we know nothing further than we have the idea of it, when that is gone, we are in perfect ignorance." Now, given that it is highly probable at least that any of the ideas which we have once had can be revived, and that nevertheless it is highly probable that some ideas are in fact lost and never revived, it must be admitted, on Locke's view, that if the latter situation does in fact occur e.g. that what I was conscious of ten years ago never is in fact revived, whether it can be or no, then (and here we must be very cautious with our language) the Self I "was then", in the hypothesis, is not, and is not any part of, the Self which I know and, in knowing, am now. And that blunt and perhaps rather ambiguous statement must be left for the moment, because to deal with the problem it raises further, as it must be dealt with, would involve too great an anticipation of the argument by a consideration of Locke's very important distinction between

"self" and "person", which we shall presently come upon. Meanwhile the (provisional) answer to the objection is that the situation is not that the ground of personal identity cannot be in continued consciousness because that can be broken as in the case we have examined, but that if it is so broken, then what is destroyed by the break has no part in the identity revealed in the otherwise continued consciousness -- which conclusion is, in the sequel, a good deal less paradoxical than it might appear.

121. It is, however, hard to leave the consideration of this objection without making the remark that it is odd that, in so far as he entertained it, this should have been an objection of George Berkeley's, since he was by his professions very much more committed than Locke to a belief in the latter Day when everyone shall receive according to his doings and the secrets of all hearts shall be laid open i.e. when all former contents of consciousness will be re-furnished to the consciousness under judgement. More than once, we may note, Locke is prepared to rest his argument on such eschatological grounds -- and, be it noted, he is perfectly entitled to do so, for religious experience, including that of apocalypse, if vouchsafed, is just as much

experience as the seeing of colours, the hearing of noises, or the smelling of smells; and the only empiricist who would attempt to deny it is one of the sort who, in A.N. Whitehead's words, refuses to look at experience as it is, naked and unashamed, and without its a priori fig-leaf -- which garment, however exiguous, is usually cut distinctively more after the style of Hume than of Locke. This leads to an observation that is of more general relevance to the present discussion than might perhaps appear, in that by reminding us of what sort of man Locke was, it may prepare us to anticipate the methods he is apt to use; and it is that among the very frequent expressions of piety and ultimate reliance on the revelation of scripture, which occur in 17th and 18th Century philosophising, Locke's, as far as my reading goes, seem the least affected, and their genuineness is vouched for by the mere bulk, which we sometimes overlook, of his exegesis of the apostle Paul (which must have been a labour of love) carried out late in life. There is in his religious attitude (which contrasts with Stillingfleet's insufferable assurance) the same impressive humility which, in the matter of philosophy, confined his exceptional powers to a candid examination of what he experienced (but of all that he experienced) and restrained

him from embarking on "the vast ocean of Being", upon the waters of which three among his contemporaries and close successors who in their time ornamented episcopal chairs, were under the misapprehension they could walk with so much more skill and confidence than he. The relevance of this digression, however, is becoming tenuous, and it must be concluded, even if such reflections on Locke's character are a pleasant relief from the dialectical rigours of the discussion.

122. We must now, in continuing the exposition of Locke's doctrine, turn to the second objection:

    iia. We are to meet an objection that these ideas which can be and are revived in "present memory" may be ideas which, in their original or a previous occurrence, were ideas in another consciousness, "somebody else's", so that the apparent relation of identity between the qualifications of the revived ideas "as self-consciously held by a person", and the same qualification of the present ideas, is false, and -- as is the logical consequence -- some or all persons would be the same person.

123. In dealing with this and the next objection, we must



revert once again to an earlier part of our exposition of what is Locke's description of experience -- and if these constant reversions are tedious, it must be pointed out that it is the copiousness of Locke's description that imposes such prolixity upon us, for neglect of the effort to keep in mind his various accounts leads, as we have had occasion to see, to extravagance of criticism -- and we can start by noticing that according both to the account and the objection to it, what totally constitutes the consciousness in which the ground of personal identity is or is not to be located, are ideas, either presented or re-presented. We have already marked that in Locke's account, an idea is whatever is the object of the understanding when a man thinks, and that includes phantasms, notions, percepts, concepts, images, and whatever in fact is the object of any perception or volition. And we have found that of ways of perception (the term being used as one of the two most general in Locke's phenomenology) there is one we call memory, by which we can make ideas "appear again, and be the objects of our thoughts." (II.x.2.) We know, further, that consciousness is inseparable from thinking and essential to it, "it being impossible for anyone to perceive without perceiving that he does perceive", and that "when we see,

hear, smell, taste, feel, meditate, or will anything, we know that we do so." In II.i.19. Locke makes it quite clear that this is his view by saying: "If they say the man thinks always, but is not always conscious of it, they may as well say his body is extended without having parts. For it is altogether as intelligible to say a body is extended without parts, as that anything thinks without being conscious of it, or perceiving that it does so." It follows, then, that every constitutive idea of the consciousness we are considering, whether of the presented sort or of the re-presented sort, to which memory can extend -- and it is no part of the present objection to deny this much -- carries with it a qualification of being "consciously possessed as some person's", and for brevity's sake we may refer to this as the "I"-qualification.<sup>1</sup> Further, since remembering is a form of perceiving, every act of remembering is, regarded as itself, a simple idea of reflection -- like every other act of perceiving so regarded. Every idea, then, in the situation we are considering, which is a

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<sup>1</sup> I very much regret being reduced to using jargon like this and like "then"-terminal and so on -- which is of a kind that Locke himself would carefully have avoided -- but it does do something to make a discussion as minute as this less unwieldy.

remembering, is a simple idea of reflection (which, we must remember, is like all other "simple" ideas, a "relatively unitary" idea with contents), part of whose content is other remembered ideas, whether simple or more complex. (An effort must be made to keep this in mind, for the analysis is about to become unavoidably rather complicated.) Now, if we revert to our previous exposition in para.89 above, we see that in considering what, in experience, are the minimal concomitants of any relatively unitary idea which is a "simple idea of reflection", that these included "duration", "self-identity", a volitional or perceptual "content", and "the awareness that it belongs to some thinking thing" (in other words, the "I"-qualification as we have decided to call it). And this last concomitant -- only isolable in abstraction -- was, we saw, the revelation of spiritual substance in every idea of reflection as presented. Now, since every time a mind has an idea, it knows it has it, so that when we see we perceive we do so, or when we smell we perceive we do so, it is evident that every idea as remembered involves the remembering of a simple idea of reflection, because, if, for example, a visual idea is remembered, it must be remembered as "a mind's visual idea perceived by that mind", so that not only is the sensual

content of the visual idea remembered, but so also is the "perceiving of" the visual idea remembered. That is to say, part of the content of every simple idea of reflection which is a present act of memory, is a simple idea of reflection which was a perceiving by a mind which took place in the past i.e. if last week I saw a green cube and today I remember that I saw it, then I have in my consciousness not only the idea which is the "memory of" the green object, but also the idea which is the "memory of" my seeing it. Every act of memory, then, involves the recollection of a simple idea of reflection; and one of the minimal concomitants of any simple idea of reflection is an "I"-qualification, so that the recollected simple idea of reflection which is necessarily part of the content of a present idea of reflection which is an act of memory, carries with it an "I"-qualification, and this "I"-qualification is recollected with it. Now, the "I"-qualification, as we saw, is what reveals a thinking substance whose idea it is at the time at which the idea occurs as a presented idea. Therefore in any act of memory there is involved the idea which is a re-presented idea (itself a minimal concomitant of an idea of reflection) revealing a thinking substance whose idea it was. That is to say, when a man



remembers, say, some part of his visual experience, he has in his consciousness not only the revived idea of the sensual content of that experience, but also the revived idea of a perceiving, part of which is, in turn, an "idea of" thinking substance (the "I"-qualification). Consequently -- and we must be very careful indeed here -- since the act of memory by which the ideas which are the memory of the past visual experience and of the perceiving of that experience, is, itself, an idea of reflection with an "I"-qualification, if there is a relation of identity between the "I"-qualification of the present idea of reflection (act of memory) and the "I"-qualification of the remembered act of perceiving, then we know that the man is remembering an idea which he had before. I said that we had to be extremely careful here, for if we do not keep some nice distinctions in mind at this point, we shall find ourselves making a quite fatal confusion. Because, as the argument stands, it might too hastily be said that since the "I"-qualification in any presented idea of reflection reveals a spiritual substance whose idea it is, and if there is a relation of identity between the "I"-qualification of a present act of memory and that of a recollected act of perceiving, then it follows that there is a perceived relation of identity between the substance



revealed in the other. And this, of course, would mean that the ground of personal identity was in a perceived continuity of spiritual substance, which would be, as I say, a fatal confusion. But this is not so. Ideas are ideas and substances are substances. Ideas are not substances: nor are "ideas of substances", the substances themselves -- however much it may be true that substances are revealed "in and through" them. Some precaution has already been taken against this possible confusion in para. 94 above, where it is pointed out that although it is true that every simple idea of reflection which we have presented, has as one of its minimal necessary concomitants, an awareness which is a reference to the mind "whose idea it is", this does not tell us whether or not it is the same thinking substance that is revealed in successive ideas, or whether each substance perishes with the passing of the idea; nor does anything in our subsequent examination of the theory of memory invalidate this. To make it clearer that this is so, we may, having recently emphasised that ideas even "of substances" are not the substances themselves, refer back to the argument in para.89 above, once again, where there is an instructive analogy. It is pointed out there that the

relatively unitary idea, for example, "of a green object" contains an awareness (by no means precise) of the object of which it is an idea, together with other indissolubly connected elements such as, once again, duration, existence, and extension, but it is further pointed out that not all such ideas have at all times this particular concomitant, which is not necessary as, for instance, "duration" is. For when such ideas are "revived" in the mind, they do not, as revived ideas, have this element which they did have when they were "presented" and not "re-presented" ideas: or, in more concrete terms, when I "see" a green object, the ideas by which I know it include a "qualification of thinghood", but when I have a memory-image of it, although the ideas which constitute that image include the idea "of a green object" i.e. a qualification as of thinghood, the actual thinghood is not revealed, because the thing is not present on the latter occasion. Likewise, in the case we are now examining, when a man has a relatively unitary idea which is a present idea of reflection, that idea contains an awareness (by no means precise) of the self whose idea it is, together with other indissolubly connected elements such as duration and existence; but when such ideas are "revived",

they do not, as revived, have precisely this element that they did have, or at least they do not have it in the same way as they did have it when they were "presented" and not "re-presented" ideas: or, again more concretely, when a man is immediately aware of thinking substance, the ideas through which he is aware of it include a "qualification of being thought by a present thinking substance", but when he has a memory of his awareness, although the ideas that constitute that memory include the idea "of self or thinking substance" i.e. a qualification as of being thought by a particular thinking substance, the actual Self is not revealed, just as in the previous example the actual Thing was not revealed, because on the latter occasion the thinking substance is not present as it was present in the original occurrence of the idea. We might try to put it by using a metaphor and saying that when Thinghood or Self is revealed as present in the ideas of them, then these ideas are, as it were, transparent; whereas when, as in memories of them, neither Thinghood nor Self is actually present, then the idea of them are opaque, so that -- if we can develop the figure without too much hazard -- the ideas in the first case are like a lense through which we "see" the

substantial thing or self, while in the second they are like a medallion or ivory on the surface of which "is engraved" some sort of memorial "of a spiritual or material substance."<sup>1</sup>

124. So, therefore, it is possible for a relation of identity to be discerned between the "I"-qualification of a past idea of reflection which was of an act of perceiving, and the "I"-qualification of a present idea of reflection which is of an act of remembering, without it being in any way possible (let alone necessary) for a similar relation to be discerned between thinking substances, because the "I"-qualification of the present act is that through which actual thinking substance is now revealed, and the "I"-qualification of the past and recollected act is that through which actual thinking substance was then revealed (and no longer is). It might be said that these distinctions are indeed very subtle -- but then so are some of the nuances of our experience, which is the criterion -- but whether they are subtle or not, they must be noted,

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<sup>1</sup> For the sake of perplexed shades such as that of John Norris, it is impossible to emphasise too strongly that these are optical metaphors.



or we shall fall into errors which Locke tries hard to avoid. It might be said, too, that the arguments to their establishment are very wearisome, but the answer is that these points have to be made clear if we are to do justice to Locke's account, and if there is a way to make their exposition chop less small and yet remain unambiguous, I have not found it.

125. In accordance, then, with what we have found above, the present objection fails. It is an objection whose point is not that there is no ground or knowledge of personal identity in the consciousness extended by memory, which we actually do have, but that in the potential consciousness which we may have, a memorial idea may be included which is not "one of our own". Berkeley's own phrasing of the objection is: "Wherein consists identity of person? Not in potential (consciousness); for then all persons may be the same, for aught we know." (loc. cit.). The suggestion, as we saw, is that the ideas which might be actualised as the "then"-terminal, might have been, when they were, at some time in the past, a "now"-terminal, the ideas of some other mind, or that the ideas which might be actualised as the "then"-terminal might be simultaneously related in



identity to two mutually exclusive series of ideas forming two different "now"-terminals. But, from our last argument, this could not be so. Because, as far as memory is concerned, every "then"-terminal and every "now"-terminal must include ideas that are their respective "I"-qualifications, and between such "I"-qualifications identity can be discerned; so that if, as probably never happens, a man were to find that he was presented with a set of ideas as a "then"-terminal, the "I"-qualification of which did not agree with the "I"-qualification of his present act of memory, then he would know (see Berkeley's remark) that he was "remembering" some "other" person's ideas -- if it is at all possible even to conceive what such an experience would be like. Accordingly, the ground of personal identity may properly, as far as this objection is concerned, be located not only in actual consciousness but also in potential consciousness, since any potential consciousness which could be actualised is such that any of its ideas could be known either as "our own" former ideas, or, per impossibile, as not so. This shews too, I think, that when its implications are drawn out in terms of the rest of his description of experience, Locke's theory of memory is a good deal less "inadequate" than some critics would have us

suppose. If it is remarked that I have perhaps made the way too easy for Locke by frequent references to, what is perhaps suspect, "acts of memory", then it must be pointed out that the substitution of "instance of memory" wherever the former phrase occurs, makes no difference at all to the argument. If anyone wishes to believe that there is no such thing as the "power in the mind" which Locke speaks of, and that no memorial idea we have is ever the result of a volition -- and to say this is to fly in the face of all the evidence from ordinary experience -- then he is at liberty so to describe his experience, provided that he realises that this mere contingency in the succession of these peculiarly qualified ideas (phenomena) is accompanied in experience by such feelings and modal alteration of consciousness that it is perfectly intelligible and legitimate to describe their occurrence as subject, in despite of Thos. Reid<sup>1</sup> and others, to such a power. If the succession of such ideas is merely contingent, even although our common experience does not persuade us that it is, and Locke's "power in the mind" is a metaphor -- then it is a very good metaphor.

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<sup>1</sup> "Intellectual Powers" Essay III Cap.7 passim.

126. Turning to the third objection we have to consider:-

iiia. We should note that Professor Gibson has an admirable short answer to the second formulation of it I gave (op.cit. p.115). This version says that a proposition about myself must differ from all others since my self is constituted by my thinking it, and that therefore any propositions about myself such as "I recognise this or that past experience as mine" can never be verified -- the mere thinking of the proposition, whether true or false, constituting the Self for and in that moment. Professor Gibson disposes of this by pointing out that "like all thought which is true, the judgement of self-consciousness is determined for me and not by me. It is no arbitrary act of mine, by which I am a self to myself, or by which I recognise certain past actions as mine, whenever I think of them. In fact like all other forms of these relations, identity and diversity of self are 'relations and ways of comparing well-founded' (II.xxvii.12.)".

My own answer in terms of the present interpretation to the more general formulation I gave of it, will be, in effect, an explication of what is involved in "relations and ways of comparing well-founded" which is, as it stands, too elliptical.

127. The version of the objection we are to consider here is in the form that because personal identity is constituted by a mind or Self annexing other ideas to the ideas constituting its present consciousness, the content of any idea so annexed becomes part of that self's personal identity, so that if the content of such an idea is or includes the doing of an action, then this present Self did the action and is the same self now as did the action or had the experience which is the content of the idea annexed. Now, if this means no more than that all the ideas which make up my consciousness are "my" ideas, then the objection is not an objection at all and can be neglected. Because, for one thing, it has already been shewn in the argument against the second objection that not only all the ideas that are presented as memorial in my or any other consciousness, but also any ideas that can be presented in that consciousness, carry with them an "I"-qualification which can be compared, as to identity, with the "I"-qualification of my present consciousness, and although as far as experience goes the "I"-qualification of all such ideas is found to agree, even if, per impossibile, one were presented whose "I"-qualification did not agree, then that fact would be apparent and my mind or Self could not annex it to the



present consciousness, since the necessary relation of identity would not be discernible. The suggestion in this objection is that a mind or Self, being furnished in consciousness with an unordered manifold of ideas, selects out from it some that it will annex to its temporally "present" ideas and thereby arbitrarily makes a personal identity -- an "identity" which could, in these circumstances, be utterly diverse in successive moments of consciousness, and which could, if the argument is pressed, bring about a situation such that an identity which is "one person" in a present moment of consciousness, could include within itself the memory of being two or more utterly distinct persons in its "own" past. But the point is that the fluent manifold of ideas presented to any present consciousness is not unordered; it is ordered in that every idea in it which is a memorial idea has an "I"-qualification which makes it one of a class of ideas whose members agree in respect of their "I"-qualifications with the members of the class of "present" ideas, and in that if there were other ideas present which did not agree in this respect with the members of the "present" class, then they would form another class within the same order. And this means, in terms of such an order, that when a mind or Self has ideas in a present moment of



consciousness, it not only does, but cannot do other than, annex all and only those memorial ideas whose "I"-qualification agrees with that of its present ideas, and, further, it not only does not, but could not, annex any others; so that, it clearly follows, the annexation which results from a comparison of "past" and "present" ideas is the result not of a creative and arbitrary act on the part of the mind or Self, but is the result of the comparison itself being based on an order in the ideas which is, as an order, distinct from the Self i.e. the order of agreeing "I"-qualifications, and consequently the "relations and ways of comparing" the ideas are, indeed, "well-founded". Therefore if this supposed objection is merely the statement that all ideas I have are "my" ideas, but that consequently I "make myself", then it can only appear to be an objection if what is involved in those ideas being "my" ideas -- as explicated above -- has been misunderstood; and the objection fails.

128. But it is possible that this objection might mean something rather different. It might mean this:- granted that all the ideas a present self annexes to itself are certainly its own ideas, so that those of them that are

memorial ideas are ideas which the present self has at some time previously experienced, the ground of that self's identity still cannot be located in the consciousness formed by these ideas, because it is impossible to distinguish sufficiently between their contents. And the result of this, it might be alleged, would be that even although every memorial idea is one which constituted part of the self's former experience by the principle of the agreement of "I"-qualifications, it still might not be possible to distinguish between an idea, properly qualified, which was "of what it is for someone else to have such and such an experience", and one which was "of what it is to have such and such an experience", when one or other of them is a "revived" idea -- and the best example of this, of course, is that of King George IV who, we are told, said and believed in later life, that he remembered being at the battle of Waterloo when, in point of historical fact, he was on that day of 1815 at Carlton House or some other place. And, the objector might urge, provided that his assertion was not a deliberate lie, and he did have in his consciousness when he made the remark, ideas, with an appropriate (though misplaced) "I"-qualification, which constituted "what it was like to be at Waterloo", then, in strict accordance with Locke's

account of personal identity, he was, when he made the remark, a person who had been at Waterloo.

We might illustrate the point by further concrete examples. If, in my consciousness, there are memorial ideas of what it was like to be at the final, or some other, Speech Day of my school career i.e. revived ideas which, as presented ideas, constituted my experience on that occasion, and also other memorial ideas which are revived ideas which constituted my consciousness when, on an occasion in the past, I imagined "what it was like to be" Alcibiades at the Symposium which Plato commemorates i.e. revived ideas which, as presented ideas, constituted my consciousness while I was reading Plato's book, then, the present objection urges, the "I"-qualification is an insufficient criterion for distinguishing these sets of ideas one from another; because, if it happens that, having both sets available to consciousness, the Self selects out from the relatively unitary ideas which constitute the remembered sets, certain parts so that it annexes to its present ideas ("I"-qualified) the ideas which would constitute the experience of "being at the Symposium as Alcibiades" as if "I"-qualified, and not the ideas constituting the experience of "imagining what it was like for Alcibiades to be at the

Symposium" as properly "I"-qualified, then, as far as Locke's account of personal identity is concerned, I am Alcibiades and nothing can prevent me from being him, even if, from a point of view external to my "present Self", it is said that the annexation is mistaken. Provided that this relation of "then"- and "now"-terminals does, in fact, occur in consciousness then, according to Locke, I am Alcibiades and I am made so by thinking myself so in this manner. And, the objector might point out, this does happen -- just look at George IV.

129. The shortest answer to this form of the objection is that it is like saying that no men can be mathematicians because some men make mistakes in adding up sums, or that no man can be a mathematician because sooner or later he will make an arithmetical error. But this sort of answer does not get to the root of the objection which really urges, as we can now see, that Locke's theory of memory which is so radically involved in his account of personal identity, does not allow us to distinguish between remembering and "imagining" -- just as, we saw in the examination of a previous objection, some critics, notably Professor Aaron, maintain that Locke's theory of memory does not distinguish between remembering and "perceiving".



130. To clear this matter up and to demonstrate that I am myself and not Alciniades, in despite of whatever "creative" mis-selections my mind may appear to be capable of, we must shew that, in fact, the comparison between ideas as "now" and ideas as "then" is to all intents and purposes always "well-founded" in the order of experience and is not a fiction-producing activity carried out by a capricious mind recreating itself in every moment of consciousness. To do this satisfactorily we must go back to a much earlier part of the exposition where, in an examination of some of T.H. Green's mis-readings of Locke, it was pointed out, at para. 64 above, that between the two most general kinds into which ideas can, in Locke's view, be sorted in respect of their content (i.e. ideas of sensation and ideas of reflection) there are certain differences which at that point we designated as differences in stability. And the ground of this difference was seen to be located in the order of the occurrence of these two sorts of idea. In the case of ideas of sensation it was found, as Locke pointed out, that the order in which they were successively or simultaneously present to any mind was controlled by the order in which occurred the objects or facts of nature "of which" they were ideas and which were revealed in them. And this, as far as



that argument was concerned, was found not to apply in the case of ideas of reflection such as "reasonings about" or "choosings to do" etc., which were controlled as to their succession by the activity of mind and not by the established order of external things in nature. But in a more recent part of our enquiries we have found that some ideas of reflection are controlled by the order of things in nature outside us. For, since if we perceive anything through sensation, we know that we do so, and in perceiving that we perceive, we have an idea of reflection which is part of, and tied to, the having of the idea of sensation. Now, this control exercised by "things" over the order in which we receive all ideas of sensation and some ideas of reflection, was the reason why the mind can exercise no voluntary control over that order, and the reason why the mind cannot ever invent a new idea of sensation -- an idea of sensation being always one that comes from a thing. But it was also pointed out that the mind once having received divers ideas of sensation subject to the imposed order, it could thereafter recompound them at will into an infinite variety of other and more complex "revived" ideas of sensation which is not subject to that order; and this is called "imagining" (and it is what some people suggest we are

really doing when we think we are "remembering"). Now, this "imagining" consists in the compounding of "revived" ideas which were formerly "ideas of sensation", and it is an activity of mind. All activities of mind are, as such, objects of ideas of reflection. Therefore, when we imagine something we must know that we do so, and in knowing or perceiving that we do so we have, as an idea of reflection, an idea whose content is "a compounding of revived ideas of sensation"; so that when I imagine Chiron the Centaur, I have an idea of reflection whose content includes revived ideas of sensation of the sort that normally shew me men and horses as compounded, or as being now compounded by my mind -- since it is only in an abstract way that I could talk of the "compounding" quite apart from what it compounds; I could never (N.B.) experience them apart.

131. Now, to leave this business of imagining aside for the moment, it is clear from all this that when I remember having been in a certain place e.g. in the Hall of my school on the last Speech Day of my school career, I have presented to me the revived ideas which were the ideas of sensation which constituted the appearance, sounds and smells of the place when I was there, and which, being ideas of sensation,

were controlled as to the order of their occurrence by the order of the things in nature which they revealed. Consequently, when I remember having been in some particular place, the revived ideas, subject to all the other qualifications we have noted in recent pages, conform to the same order of occurrence; and if they did not, but were re-presented in some other order, then they would not be qualified as "my" ideas, that is to say they would not have the "I"-qualification which attaches them to the other ideas present at the time when "I am remembering my having been in a particular place" -- for, being controlled as to their order by the order of "things", if they are present in a different order, they must be the ideas of things different to those which actually were at the place remembered and so, being in that case different ideas, they are not adequately qualified; but since all ideas I do have are so qualified, and any I could have would have to be so qualified or rejected (which probably never has to happen), and since many ideas ~~that~~ I do have are presented in the mode "as remembered" and with the proper "I"-qualification, then clearly it follows that I can and do actually "remember", and that the re-presented ideas in terms of which I do so are ordered in the same way as they were when, in the past, they were

presented ideas of sensation, and that is an order which is controlled by an archetypal order of the occurrence of things in nature which are not themselves the ideas, although they are presented through the ideas, and although the ideas are "of them". The things "of which" the ideas are, form an order of things external to the mind or Self, consequently, as far as memory is concerned, the order in which our ideas occur is "well-founded". Now, of this order, one important aspect at least is that it is in the form of a "before" and "after", or "earlier" and "later" series. Things are presented after each other, and in retrospect are presented as "earlier" or "later" than each other in the same series. Consequently, when I remember something, the revived ideas of it are not re-presented in, as it were, isolation, but as related by being "before" or "after" each other in the series of their original presentation. And if it is asked how this is so in the case when we remember a "single thing", we must be careful to know what a "single" thing indicates. It is, as we have very clearly seen before, quite impossible that I should have presented to me an utterly "simple" idea, and it is equally patent that I could not have one re-presented to me. Simplicity is a relative term and there are certain very

definite limits to it. A "single" thing could not be less than a relatively unitary idea at or above the lowest level of "simplicity". But that I could remember a "single" thing even in this sense seems very doubtful, and it certainly is not what I remember when, for example, I remember having been in a particular place. What I remember in that case and in the most normal cases of remembering, is a sub-series of the total before-after series of things that have been presented to me since I became conscious. Consequently the revived ideas I have in remembering it, are in sub-series (before-after) which repeat the order of the sub-series of original presentation. Now, we must be very careful to note what this does not imply. In the first place it does not imply that when I remember something I mentally "run through" the whole before-after master-series until I come upon and stop at some one particular point which is, then, the thing I am remembering. Nor does it imply that if what I am remembering, e.g. myself having been at a particular place, consists of a number of sub-series which can be called A. B. C. D. E..... etc., which are all parts of some more inclusive series and, for that matter, of the master series, I cannot then have re-presented sub-series C. (as a sub-series) before sub-series A., or sub-series B. (as



a sub-series) after sub-series E., although as presented these sub-series were successive. That this is obviously not so can be verified by the observation that if I remember my journey from Edinburgh to Perth, I may remember the sub-series which constitutes my recollection of the Forth Bridge before I remember the sub-series which constitutes my recollection of getting into the train at the Waverley Station, even although the ideas -- mostly of succession -- from which the sub-series of revived ideas are derived, were not presented in that order. All this is clear enough, but what is perplexing is the question as to what is the shortest sub-series of revived ideas I can and do have presented in experience; and that it is perplexing is not, I think, due to faults in Locke's account or in this extension of it, but is due to the complexity, fluency, and instability of our experience as we do have it, a state of affairs that makes it necessary to exercise caution in applying arbitrary "cuts" to the series and patterns which it forms. It is, I think, pretty certain that the briefest sub-series of revived ideas which we can have, although short indeed in comparison with the master-series of our total continuing experience, is much longer than people who try to apply the thoroughgoing "atomistic" analyses of Locke's

successors to experience, would make it -- and this serves to remind us that descriptions based on such analyses are, in respect of memory as well as in others, gross distortion. The point at present at issue, however, is that this is a specific way in which the ideas I have when I remember anything are grounded -- viz. in the way in which the things of which they are revived ideas originally occurred in series of greater or less length; and it is a quite specific way which is apart from the Self or any "creative" or "selective" capacity the Self may have. It is also one which will be of some importance in considering "imagining" as against "remembering".

132. To leave aside for the moment this matter of "remembering", it is likewise clear from what has been rehearsed of the arguments begun in para.64, that when I imagine something, e.g. myself as having been in a particular place where I never have been, I have presented to me series of ideas of reflection whose content is the "compounding together of revived ideas originally presented as ideas of sensation." And these revived ideas which in their "being now compounded" are the content of those ideas of reflection, are ideas derived usually from ideas of

sensation presented in very diverse before-after sub-series of the total series of my ideas of sensation. Consequently, the order in which I have the revived ideas which are part of the content of my present imagining, is not controlled as to succession by the order of the original ideas of sensation from which they are derived, as, in the case of remembering, all revived ideas are. Their order is controlled only by the order in which the ideas of reflection which constitute my imagining follow each other in the present, subject to the activity of mind, and not to the order of things. And this is what Locke means by the note Professor Aaron extracts from his Journal: "Memory is ~~always~~ the picture of something, the idea whereof has existed before in our thoughts, as near the life as we can draw it; but imagination is a picture drawn in our minds without reference to a pattern." - although, we should note, the plastic medium (so to speak) in which the latter picture is drawn has to be derived from ideas of sensation which have "existed before in our thoughts", in other patterns. And, again, in the text of the "Essay" itself he writes in this connection: (II.xxx.5.): "Whether such substances as these can possibly exist or not," -- he refers to such things as a Centaur or a yellow metal lighter than water -- "it is probable that we

do not know; but be that as it will, these ideas of substances, being made conformable to no pattern existing that we know; and consisting of such collections of ideas as no substances ever showed us united together, they ought to pass with us for barely imaginary....."

133. But if we change the perspective of the situation slightly -- as will be useful if we are to answer the present objection fully -- and regard it not as myself now imagining myself as having been in a particular place where I never have been, but as myself now at time T-2 remembering that at time T-1 I was imagining myself as having been in a particular place where I never have been, e.g. in Agathon's house on the night of the celebrated Symposium, then in considering this situation we have to note that although ideas of reflection are in general not controlled as to their order, in the way ideas of sensation are, by the order of "things" -- except for those of them inseparably attached to every perception in that we perceive that we perceive -- nevertheless ideas of reflection themselves, as psychic occurrences, are natural facts. That all ideas occurring in minds are natural facts, we have observed before. Consequently, although it is true that when they occur in the present,

ideas of reflection are controlled in respect of their order only by the activity of the mind, when they are past, and have become revived ideas of reflection, they are controlled by the pattern which they constituted when they occurred as natural facts, just as much as remembered ideas of sensation are. Likewise, when such ideas constituting a past imagining are revived, they can only be revived as related specifically in a before-after series controlled by the original before-after series of their occurrence as natural facts; so that, as far as imagining is concerned, the ideas which constitute anything I have imagined, as distinct from anything I "have actually experienced", are grounded in an order quite extrinsic to the mind or any "creative" or "selective" ability it may possess, which means that both in respect of "remembered ideas" and of "imagined ideas", the judgement of self-consciousness is, as Professor Gibson reminds us, determined for me and not by me. This is to say that the mind is never at liberty to select random ideas of imagined things and random ideas of remembered things, annexing them to each other and to present ideas in consciousness, because no ideas whether of imagined things or of remembered things are, in fact, random; for all are presented as conditioned by the



two orders of which all of both kinds are simultaneously members viz. the order of ideas related by identity of "I"-qualification, and the order of ideas controlled by the succession of things-in-nature, which includes ideas as natural facts occurring in minds. And in the case of the example we used previously, this means that if, having available to consciousness both the series of memorial ideas which constitute my memory of my final Speech Day at school, and the series of imaginative ideas constituting my imagining what it was to be Alcibiades at the Symposium, "I", or the mind thinking in me now, is unable to distinguish between them, then there is every reason why it should be able so to distinguish, and experience gives evidence that in the great majority of cases, minds do so distinguish.

134. An objector might still urge, however, that, be all this as it may, the demonstration given still does not account for the case of George IV. And the answer, already hinted, is that Locke nowhere denies that mistakes can be made, nor in particular that memory is fallible -- as indeed we have already seen in para.120 above. To reinforce the point, we may note further that he speaks in II.x.9. of "defects we may observe in the memory of one man compared

with another", and in the same paragraph of the case of that "prodigy of parts, Monsieur Pascal" the decay of whose health had "impaired his memory". And as to imagination, we are to note that Locke regards us as so apt to error by reason of its mal-functioning that he locates in it the principal cause of madness -- which is what we would generally call George IV's described state if persisted in, or my condition if I continued to be conscious of being Alcibiades and of what I did at Agathon's party. Professor Aaron has a quotation in this connection from Locke's Journal (op.cit. p.130): "Madness seems to be nothing but a disorder in the imagination, and not in the discursive faculty." And there is a passage in the Essay itself at II.xi.13. which is so very pertinent to the present part of the discussion that I shall quote it. Speaking of madmen, he says: "For they do not appear to me to have lost the faculty of reasoning, but having joined together some ideas very wrongly, they mistake them for truths; and they err as men do that argue aright from principles. For, by the violence of their imaginations, having taken their fancies for realities, they make right deductions from them. Thus you shall find a distracted

man fancying himself a king, with a right inference require suitable attendance, respect, and obedience; others who have thought themselves made of glass, have used the caution necessary to preserve such brittle bodies."

That there may be confusion in and between what we remember and what we imagine, Locke is, then, well aware; but it happens over prolonged periods in few cases.

Nevertheless, there remains this point to the objection -- and it will be observed that it is the contrary of the residual point left to the first objection -- that if anyone such as George IV continues to be conscious of having been at Waterloo or of being Alcibiades, in the manner suggested, then, as far as Locke's account goes, there is quite an important sense, as we shall find, in which as "Self" or "Person" to himself, he was at Waterloo or is Alcibiades and is a person identical with the person who fired a musket before Quatre Bras or drank at the Symposium, although as "Person" to other Selves, he most certainly is not -- that he could not in any circumstances be present as "Self" to other Selves, is something that remains to be clarified.

But on the grounds that this failure in memory or imagination is relatively very rare and that generally speaking, memory and imagination are clearly distinguishable

in the way and for the reasons shewn, and that consequently continuity of consciousness may, as far as the possibility of their confusion is concerned, remain the ground of personal identity, the third and last objection fails.



VI.

THE EXAMINATION OF LOCKE'S ACCOUNT OF PERSONAL IDENTITY IN  
BOOK II CONTINUED, WITH REFERENCE TO THE DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN  
"MAN", "PERSON", AND "SELF".

135. In the previous section I tried to shew which are Locke's main reasons for grounding Personal Identity in continuity of consciousness and not in identity of substance, and to eliminate as far as possible what seemed to be some of the most pertinent objections to them. We must now, as was undertaken to be done at the beginning of that section, return to consider how in his exposition in Book II he returns more than once, each time characteristically changing his approach by a little, to the reinforcement of his great principle that: "It is not unity of substance that comprehends all sorts of identity, or will determine it in every case."

136. We saw that in starting his main exposition, Locke asks, in effect, "if continuing consciousness is not the ground of Personal Identity -- and there seems to me to be a prima facie case that it is -- what are the alternatives?"



And the first alternative is "a continuing, identical, single spiritual substance." Having shewn some of the consequences of this in the ways noticed and extended in the last section, he then goes on to turn the question round and ask, in effect, "Supposing the persistence of a single spiritual substance is, after all, the ground of Personal Identity, what are the consequences of this?" And again, as the exposition proceeds, he asks, in effect, (ii) "Supposing that the ground of Personal Identity is neither in continuity of consciousness nor in persistence of a single spiritual substance but in the organic identity of human bodies constituted by the changing material substances of their parts in conformity to the organic pattern, what are the consequences of this view?" And a consideration of these hypotheses reveals for examination some interesting cross-connections which are included in the question (iii), "What is the relation between the 'Identity of a Man' and the 'Identity of a Person'?" And, finally, the consideration of all these brings us to (iv), the revelation of a distinction which is crucial to the whole complex problems which from Locke's day to ours have perplexed the matters of "Personal Identity", "Self", "Self-consciousness", and "Moral Responsibility" viz. the distinction between "self" and "person".

This, indeed, is the very heart of the matter, and the reason why our approach to it has been so long and sometimes apparently devious, is that in exploring the province which this distinction reveals, and which is the last traversible territory extending on all sides of the last -- and probably impregnable -- citadel of the "Self", we shall have to employ findings which have been made in almost all of the previous paragraphs or to which the argument of these paragraphs has been ancillary, -- for example, the phenomenon we noted in connection with the general notions both of "Identity" and of "Substance", which consists in a "double presentation" in and of experience, and, again, various aspects of what it is to perceive and what it is to remember, which we have more recently examined.

137. First of all, as to the question, "If continued spiritual substance does constitute identity, what are the consequences?", Locke raises the very pertinent query (II.xxvii.13): "Whether, if the same thinking substance ..... be changed, it can be the same person?" That is to say, if the consciousness which is "personal" (however the person is fundamentally constituted) remains unaltered, but the substance underlying the consciousness -- i.e. the spiritual

substance that thinks in and through the consciousness -- changes, is there one person or two persons? In examining this, Locke grants that if, as we have seen above he shews is not the case, our consciousness were all-inclusive of itself at every instant, then this question could not even be asked. But since, as he remarks here, "consciousness" is not "the same individual action ... but ... a present representation of a past action", or in other words, since all consciousness is in fact interrupted by periods in which the hypothetically single constituting substance neither thinks nor acts -- for it would have the necessary reflex awareness of perceiving that it perceived, if it did -- and these periods are bridged only by "memory"; then, "that which we call the same consciousness, not being the same individual act, why one intellectual substance may not have represented to it, as done by itself, what it never did, and was perhaps done by some other agent.... will be difficult to determine from the nature of things." And this is to say that because, quite discounting the extension and connectedness of consciousness achieved by memory in the ways pointed out by Locke which we have already noted, identity is to be grounded in continuing substance of which we are not in fact conscious, then, on this hypothesis, as Locke

points out, "two thinking substances" (and therefore, ex hypothesis, two persons) "may make but one person" and -- if we turn Berkeley's words back on himself -- "for aught we know" (all evidence of mere extended consciousness being discounted) "all persons may be the same." Whereas, on the other hand, according to Locke's counter hypothesis -- that the ground of identity is in continued consciousness -- we can know, for the reasons set out at some length in para.125 above which involve the principle of the agreement of "I"-qualifications, that all persons are not the same and that one person is not another. Since veridical remembering "uniting these distant actions into the same person, whatever substances contributed to their production (II.xxvii.10a)", forms a real experienced identity, the mere hypothesis of a continued substance must yield to it on the ground, certainly, of its consequences in this respect. But before we can leave the consideration of this, we must remember that the objection to which the analysis of veridical remembering was an answer, did have, we found, some point left to it; and that was (see para.134 above) that if memory was, in fact, in error -- as in the case, presumably, of George IV -- then a strange and unnatural sort of "identity" undoubtedly resulted -- the sort of identity which would



perhaps allow things "done by some other agent" to be annexed to the "wrong person". And we must note that in the passage we are examining here, Locke is not unmindful of this. "Why" he says, "such a representation (i.e. such a one as the Waterloo delusion) may not possibly be without matter of fact, as well as several representations in dreams are, which yet whilst dreaming we take for true ..... will by us, till we have clearer views of the nature of thinking substances, be best resolved into the goodness of God; who as far as the happiness or misery of any of his sensible creatures is concerned in it, will not by any fatal error of theirs, transfer from one to another that consciousness which draws reward or punishment with it." And this, applied to the example we have been using, means that if anyone like George IV who is conscious of having done something or much that he ~~was~~ never "in fact" done, then when, in any important sense, he is under judgement for his actions, responsibility will not be imputed to him, under a benevolent providence, for any of his actions at some Waterloo -- however scandalous and however clearly remembered they may be i.e. however wrongly the "I"-qualifications are related.



138. This qualification of Locke's leads us into another brief excursus in more general terms, which can start by our noting that once again Locke is prepared to introduce into his general account of experience (as an extension of what he experienced) concepts such as that of a benevolent providence for which his own experience did give warrant, even if they are concepts whose possession is peculiar to some sorts of men only, and in so far as this thesis is expository of Locke's views, we must only take note of this historically, but one of the points I am concerned to make from a more critical point of view, is that when he does this, then as far as the use of technical terms goes, he is no less an "empiricist" than other philosophers whose accounts have been different. When we are tempted -- as no doubt we all are from time to time -- to put such beliefs . and the men like Locke who hold them into their "proper historical or psychological perspective" -- or into some equally ambiguous metaphor -- from some point of view of our own which is somehow superior, but generally unspecified, it is well to keep in mind that there is nothing any more inherently irrational, or divorced from the ordinary run of experience (which is the important thing here) in a belief in a benevolent providence, than there is in the dogmatic,

a priori assumptions of "empiricists" of schools later than Locke -- some of them so much later that, however anachronistic it may appear to some of us, they are quite contemporary. The point of this is, that if anyone is disposed to say that Locke's resolution, here, of the problem raised by the results of default in remembering and imagining, into the goodness of God, is merely facile, then, to my mind, that is itself merely a facile criticism. The point which Locke is making is a perfectly serious (and quite familiar) one viz. that responsibility is not ultimately to be imputed -- and whether the imputation is in terms of a process of judgement as in the words of the Apostle or the 20th chapter of Revelation or not, is very little to the point -- to any person because something is erroneously, but perhaps ineradicably, contained in his consciousness. And an account which expresses this in terms of the intervention -- in some sense perceived or known or revealed "ideally" -- of a benevolent God, is, given Locke's starting point, perfectly legitimate, and it is to be taken seriously, and not regarded as a psychologically or historically explicable (and therefore excusable) lapse into superstition. In other words, one cannot get rid of Locke's religious experience, merely by pointing out that one does not oneself have any -- if such is

the case. This is not to say that one must accept Locke's account here -- for it might well be that what he is saying does not, in its literal sense, draw our attention to anything recognisable in our own experience -- but it is to say that his account here and elsewhere is to be seriously considered and not smiled off tolerantly as one of the great man's typical "confusions", a not uncommon way of regarding Locke which I find distasteful, and, I confess, irritating. A view of human action and of human consciousness of action in the modes which include "ideas of" responsibility, such that it is described as ultimately subject to assessment and requital -- analogous at least to "judgement" -- is neither inconceivable nor at all obviously absurd i.e. "moral" experience is a part of most ordinary men's experience and indeed, I suspect, of the experience of all men other than certain quite easily recognisable types of lunatic, and such moral experience, however anti-theological in tone, cannot be free from the notion of "desert". If it is urged that this part of Locke's account, which is necessary to make it a complete account, is not to be taken seriously because the suggestion that such vital errors as we are here considering will be put right by some "God the Judge", is a suggestion unacceptably crude and naive, then it must be

pointed out for the benefit of anyone whose intellectual sophistication makes him so squeamish, that one can hold a belief in what at a convenient level can be expressed in traditional terms as "benevolent providence", "judgement", or, plainly, "the good God", without in any way being bound to express oneself, or think, subject to the conventionalised (if not purely conventional) limits to conceptualisation or vocabulary of, for example, a Norman peasant or a Calvinist divine -- of which fact several series of Gifford Lectures delivered in the past two or three decades is sufficient proof.

139. Having now taken precautions to defend this part of Locke's account -- which, I maintain, must be taken seriously -- from criticisms, often and ironically coming from "empiricist" sources, of a sort which has sometimes been designated "sixth-form rationalist", we can go on to note how Locke continues his consideration of the consequences of this hypothesis in a later paragraph, 23, of II.xxvii. Let us suppose, he says, that two quite distinct consciousnesses are located alternately in the same man i.e. consciousnesses which consist of series none of whose units are common or ever contained in a third inclusive series; then,



having supposed this, are we not presented with two persons as distinct as Socrates and Plato? And is not the distinction based solely on the mutual exclusiveness of the contents of the consciousnesses? It does not, he points out, make any difference if we suppose the distinct consciousnesses as underlain by different spiritual substances and the body they are located in as a mere accident, for, again, it is the nature and content of the consciousnesses that is the ground of the distinction. So that, even granting the possible alternation of substance, this hypothesis has as a minor consequence "two persons with the same body" -- and although as later researches into "multiple personality" suggest to us, this situation is not impossible, the rarity and, so to speak, exotic nature of just those cases that are cited in this connection are enough to raise further doubts as to whether any such general hypothesis as this can account for "normal" personality -- which means no more than "most other personalities". The real objection to the "substance" theory is however, not that two persons may at different times be manifested in the same body, but that if and when they are, the ground of the distinction between them is not "substance".

Let us now, on the other hand, suppose that this same



body we are considering is the locus of the same spiritual substance which is possessed, as before, of, alternately, say for twelve hours each, two mutually exclusive series of conscious states. We are entitled to make this supposition as of a possibility, because all consciousness is, by inspection, known to be subject to interruption -- which is a point made, likewise, by the defenders of the hypothesis against Locke. Let us further suppose that in each state of the "A" series, as we may call it, the spiritual substance is unaware of any state of the "B" series, as we may call it, only because of failure of memory -- and we are entitled to suppose this as a possibility because, as we have seen, it is a main point of the defenders of this hypothesis against Locke's that memory is fallible. Then, having made these suppositions which are all, in terms of the substance theory, within the bounds of possibility, are we not presented with the consequence, even less palatable from the point of view of the hypothesis, that there can be two persons sharing one spiritual substance i.e. that one person can be two persons? If it is said that this depends on an ambiguous use of the word "person", and that person means "one substance", then it must be pointed out that if the two consciousnesses we started with are distinct, and as distinct as those of Socrates and

Plato because of the utter diversity of their contents -- and this is certainly one sense, in the ordinary use, of "being a person" -- then this hypothesis must mean -- if this sense is to be disallowed -- that there are no such distinctions as the one commonly made between a Socrates and a Plato or a Peter and a Paul; which is, again, unacceptable. But none of these awkward consequences follow on Locke's hypothesis which locates not only the distinction between the persons but the ground of their several identities, in the continuity of each consciousness "so that self is not determined by identity or diversity of substance, which it cannot be sure of, but only by identity of consciousness (II.xxvii.23)".

140. Reverting now to 14 of II.xxvii., we find that Locke shifts his ground a little to approach the matter by studying in a slightly different way the same question: "Whether the same immaterial substance remaining, there may be two distinct persons?" He points out that certainly all those who have held the various doctrines of reincarnation and pre-existence must answer "yes" to this question. But going on to examine what is involved in such an answer, he points out that if, in any one incarnation, a mind is completely shorn of all recollection of all previous ones, then

there is no difference whatever between this situation and that of the mind's (or minds') being created afresh on each occasion. If the spiritual substance which thinks in me now is, per accidens, that which once thought in Hecuba, that does not make Hecuba and me one person, unless I have some recollection of being Priam's wife. If I have not i.e. do not share consciousness with Hecuba, then that spiritual substance which was hers and is mine, no more makes me the same person as her, than would the presence in my body of some of the material substance which once made hers -- as might after her disintegration and all sorts of cyclic process, be the case -- and Locke's point might well be put here by our asking with Hamlet: "What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba?" And although this does not mean that the same spiritual substance may not be successively present in different consciousnesses, it does demonstrate the point that its presence has nothing whatever to do with personal identity.

These, then, are further consequences and implications of the view that continued spiritual substance is the ground of identity, and they are such that Locke quite properly regards them as making the description of our experience of our selves in terms of it, a distortion. If anyone says



that continued spiritual substance makes him a person -- and he knows it, then he must be making some sort of "act of faith", for, as far as experience goes, this is not the case. If, having somehow made such an act of faith, a man chooses to describe his experience in terms of such a self, then he is entitled to do so, provided that, as I think Locke would agree, we are clear that although the various complexes of ideas that constitute such an act of faith may undoubtedly be experienced, what the faith is in, is not. It is perhaps to be noted here that this objection does not apply in the same way to the sort of act of faith, as it might be regarded, which Locke indulges in by appealing to a moral order in the universe when dealing with the difficulty we noticed before; because, although it is possible for a man to deny convincingly, as Locke does, that he has any experience of himself as a continuing spiritual substance, it is not possible for a man to deny convincingly -- or so it seems to me -- that he has moral experience involving the notions of judgement and desert obtaining in an absolute sense -- extra-humanly and extra-sociologically -- i.e. to deny that he has the sort of experience to which Locke sometimes draws our attention quite legitimately by using Christian apocalyptic terms; and even if a man is not

convinced by such experience, as Locke was, of the actual operation of something at least like divine justice, then he is certainly involved in the admission that if it doesn't operate, then it ought to, or, if he is a very doctrinaire Protagorean, in the admission that "it would be very nice (meaning desirable) if it did operate"; and such admissions make it clear that Locke's account is in this respect intelligible to any man whose experience is not markedly anomalous. In other words, the appeal to the existence of a moral order is not divorced from ordinary experience in the way that an appeal to the existence of a monadic spiritual substance as Self, is.

141. We must now turn to the second alternative hypothesis which Locke examines, though at less length and less explicitly viz. that held by people who would "place thought in a purely animal constitution, void of an immaterial substance (II.xxvii.12)". And this, he points out, is really concerned with the same general question: "Whether if the same substance which thinks, be changed, it can be the same person?", for, obviously enough, people who adopt this hypothesis cannot locate the ground of personal identity in identity of even material substance; because, as he has



pointed out in a previous paragraph, 11a, although a consciousness, when located in some particular body, is conscious of and "concerned for" the various parts of that body in such a way that they are known and felt as parts of itself, if any of them is amputated, this conscious concern ceases, the part decays and disintegrates, its various material substances being at least totally dispersed, and it is no longer known, felt, or regarded as part of the Self. And, further, an animal constitution in a normal state -- i.e. not subject to such violent lesions as these suggested just now -- is not a stable colligation of material substances, as we already know from the previous section on "Organic Identities". Its parts are constantly changing and its identity is grounded in organic function and not in substantial identity. This, Locke noted by the way, means that those who insist on locating the grounds of personal identity in one spiritual substance must take account of the fact that the vitality and identity which animals, to a degree, share with men, is located in change of material substance. For if they are disposed to ~~deny~~ that it can be so located because, precisely, of the change, then they may be committed to locating it -- counter to the Cartesian hypothesis about animals -- in the

same sort of continued immaterial substance as that in which they locate human identity. And if they are disposed to admit that it is so located, then they must shew good reason why personal identity cannot be located in an exactly similar change of spiritual substance -- which is a good debating point against the Cartesians, if it is not much more --; and this links up interestingly with another argument which he uses in considering the same general sort of hypothesis, at another place viz. in the Second Reply to Stillingfleet, where he remarks (Works vol. iv. p. 466): "Though to me sensation be comprehended under thought in general, yet in the foregoing discourse I have spoken of sense in brutes. But here I take liberty to observe, that if your lordship allows brutes to have sensation, it will follow, either that God can and doth give to some parcels of matter a power of perception and thinking; or that all animals have immaterial, and consequently, according to your lordship, immortal souls, as well as men; and to say that fleas and mites etc. have immaterial souls as well as men, will probably be looked on as going a great way to serving an hypothesis, and it would not very well agree with what your lordship says." And this shews, I think, that Locke is inclined to find more to be said

for this "materialist" hypothesis than for the "spiritualist" one, although his admission of sensation in animals (and therefore of a certain sort of thinking) does not automatically involve him in regarding men or persons as parcels of "thinking matter", even if animals are to be so regarded (as appears here), because there is the crucial distinction between sensation (thinking) in animals and in men, that in the latter case and not in the former, the sensation is always accompanied by self-consciousness i.e. when we perceive we always, and must, "perceive that we perceive", but animals do not.

The objections to this hypothesis -- about which Locke is really very cautious, as we can see from the the quotations from the letter to Stillingfleet, and of which there is a significant echo in Book IV. -- come incidentally, and sometimes by implication, in other parts of the chapter, some of which we have already looked at, and all of them, just as much as the objections against the spiritualist hypothesis, point persistently to consciousness as the sole possible ground of personal identity. For example, in the course of his consideration of the problem about fallacious memory and the intransferability of moral responsibility which we examined in para.137 above, he asks in view of the confinement

(under providence) of responsibility to that of which we can be conscious, "how far this may be an argument against those who would place thinking in a system of fleeting animal spirits (II.xxvii.13)". And what he means by this is that if thinking is confined to a fleeting system of animal spirits, then the identity of a conscious intelligent being is thereby located in a mere animal constitution, and the consequence of this would be that if the "animal constitution" were the instrument by which something was done, then the "self" or "person" would be responsible for that thing whether or not it was conscious, or ever could be, of having done it i.e. whether that "self" or "person" were in the proper sense the "agent", although its physical members were, in fact, the "instrument"; and by this is opened up a considerable part of the universe of discourse traversed by the Aristotelian Ethics. But we do not have to enter upon that here; for, as is the implication of Locke's argument, we do not mean by "person" a thing which does not, or may not, have the sort of consciousness to which responsibility can be annexed. That is to say, we do not in the ordinary course of experience find ourselves or other people as "persons" of this sort, and it is not the identity of this sort of thing we are enquiring into -- as will perhaps become clearer when we



enquire into the relation of the identity of "a man" to the identity of a "person".

142. There is another difficulty in such a hypothesis, the existence of which is implied in Locke's discussion, viz. if it is the case that, as we saw in 11a, when a "person" is located in a certain body, then all members of that body are considered as parts of the person's Self with which it is in a uniquely intimate relation while they remain parts of the "animal constitution" and contribute to the maintenance of its organic function, but when they no longer are, or do so, it has no more relation with them than with any other extraneous parcel of matter e.g. when a member is amputated, then the question arises as to how far, in principle; this excision of parts can go on without destroying the person's identity. To the limit at which the animal constitution ceases to be one i.e. until the animal is "clinically" dead? Or to the limit, on this side of clinical death, at which consciousness ceases? If it is the latter, then this is no more than the location of the ground of identity in consciousness. If it is the former, then it would have to be observed that a vestigial animal constitution, not yet clinically dead, but rendered forever



unconscious i.e. a piece of matter not dead only in that it is "not <sup>in</sup>organic", is not, and could not be, a "conscious intelligent being", so that between the supersession of consciousness and the supersession of organic life, there would be an interval in which the sufficient ground of a person's identity, as it is on the hypothesis, would not, in fact, constitute a person. The contention that it is not in the animal constitution that the identity is to be grounded, but in the consciousness that can be coeval with it, is reinforced by Locke's further observation in para.17 of xxvii. that while "every one finds that, whilst comprehended under ..... consciousness, the little finger is as much a part of himself as what is most so", if the little finger were to be removed, and if the consciousness were to accompany it on its removal, then the Person and the Person's identity, and the "self", would be located in the little finger, and would have no more connection with the remaining carcass thus deprived of consciousness than with any other part of the physical universe.

And these are the unacceptable consequences of this second hypothesis, which must be regarded as invalidating it and pointing away from it to the location of personal identity in consciousness alone.

143. The consideration of these "spiritualist" and "materialist" hypotheses and their consequences leads us, naturally enough, to an examination of the relation between the identity of "a man" and that of "a person", which we have already touched on by the way. At II.xxvii.10., Locke makes his characteristic, first compendious statement of the matter: "For I presume it is not the idea of a thinking or rational being alone that makes the idea of a man in most people's sense: but of a body, so and so shaped, joined to it; and if that be the idea of a man, the same successive body not shifted all at once, must, as well as the same immaterial spirit, go to the making of the same man" and, as will be remembered from a previous section, the soul of Heliogabalus inhabiting the body of one of his hogs, is not the man Heliogabalus. Likewise, as Locke has it in an example in 15 of xxvii., if the soul of a Prince migrates to the body of a Cobbler on the departure of the Cobbler's consciousness, then the resulting synthetic Cobbler-Prince is the same person as the Prince, but the same man as the Cobbler. From which it follows that, on Locke's account, continued identity of body has nothing to do with identity of person, but has a great deal to do with the identity of what we call a man. It is interesting to note that in

amplification of this, at II.xxvii.20, Locke links this conclusion up with a vital question we have already been considering viz. how identity is affected by a total loss of consciousness of some parts of a biography "beyond a possibility of retrieving them." (Cp. para.120 above). And here it is pointed out that if this question is raised in the form: "Am I the same person that did these actions, had these thoughts that I once was conscious of, though I have now forgot them?" then the "I" applies to the "man" and not to the "person"; for the person is constituted by the consciousness it has, and what that does not include is no part of the person, although it may be part of the man whom other people remember as having acted thus and thus, or as having been conscious in this mode or that. (This is an important point which anticipates a distinction yet to be made.) And the confusion which arises when the question is asked, comes, as Locke points out, from the failure to distinguish between "same man" and "same person" in common usage, although the distinction and what it implies -- i.e. that one man can in an important sense be two persons -- is borne out by another common usage viz. a man is sometimes said to be, in special circumstances, "not himself" or "beside himself".

144. Being perhaps aware that this part of his account was quite as liable to be unpalatable as the general doctrine that substance is not the sole, or even main, ground of identity, Locke goes on to elaborate the point by raising yet again all the questions we have been considering, but specifically in relation to these interesting cross-distinctions between Man, Person, Body, and Consciousness -- and this, as we have noticed before, is quite typical of his general method. The general form of the question we have to consider is: "How can the same individual man be two persons? In answering this question there are, as Locke points out, three possible hypotheses as to the nature of the "same individual man":

(i) that it is the same individual, immaterial, thinking substance;

(ii) that it is the same animal constitution without regard to immaterial spirit;

(iii) that it is the same, individual, immaterial, thinking substance underlying the same animal constitution.

Now, whichever of these is adopted as a description of the "same individual man", the identity of the person or persons who he is, is not at all affected but remains grounded only in consciousness, because in the case of (i): the same spiritual substance may be present in different

organisms at different times (see para.139 above) and possess diverse consciousness; and in the case of (ii): the animal constitution, as such, constantly changes and only the consciousness remains in any sense "the same" (see para.140 above); and in the case of (iii): the same applies as does in the case of (ii), and further, there apply the considerations in para.137 above, concerning the interruptedness of consciousness. Consequently, the reason why one man can be two persons i.e. why the grounds of the identity of "a man" and of a "person" are not the same, is that in the case of "man", something further than continuity of consciousness is required, though precisely what, is a matter on which, as Locke says, there is little agreement; but it is generally something that presupposes the existence of an animal organism -- even if only as a vehicle for spirit: whereas "person" requires no more and no less than continuity of consciousness "which is that alone which makes what we call self", unless, as we have seen, we are to be involved "in great absurdities."

145. Locke approaches this matter of the indifference of personal identity to the continuity or even existence of bodily organisms, and the distinctions grounded in it, from



another angle, which, as well as illuminating the point he is making, is of some intrinsic interest. This consists in his noting what are the consequences of his view in relation to the doctrine of the Resurrection, and such an approach is justifiable from an expository point of view alone, because speculation (and controversy) on such points of doctrine was an accepted exercise among the educated public he had in mind when writing -- quite apart from the more general legitimation of an appeal to religious experience, as such, which I tried to establish previously. In the conclusion of the paragraph of the "Essay" we were last considering (II.xxvii.21) Locke observes: "But then they who place human identity in consciousness only, and not in something else, must consider how they will make the infant Socrates the same man with Socrates after the resurrection." Now there is a possibility of confusion here which is due more than usually to Locke's phrasing. It must be clearly noted that, here, "human identity" means "identity of a man" as distinct from "person". In a previous sentence he has spoken of "making human identity to consist in the same thing wherein we place personal identity", thereby distinguishing them, although introducing the unnecessary extra term "human" identity. The point is, then, that if grounded

in consciousness, then, although after the resurrection Socrates may be the same person as he was before it (and this is what matters) he may be two different men before and after. And whether or not it is necessary that Socrates should be the same man after the resurrection as before, is a theological point which is left open for the moment. But that Socrates, being the same person after death, may, according to this account, be a different man in the same circumstances, Locke has already made clear in earlier paragraphs, 14-15, by pointing out that "the same immaterial substance, without the same consciousness, no more making the same person, by being united to any body, than the same particle of matter, without consciousness, united to any body, makes the same person", we are then able "without any difficulty to conceive the same person at the resurrection, though in a body not exactly in make or parts the same which he had here". And since, in Locke's view, body is essential to "man", and since indeed man is, as we can recollect from the section on "Organic Identities", strictly a zoological term, this means that the same person can be a different man (which is no more than to have a different body) at and after the resurrection. This whole question of the relation of Locke's account to

the doctrine of the Resurrection receives very considerable amplification in the controversy with Stillingfleet, who made it one of his charges that this account of Locke's is incompatible with Christian doctrine. Locke's reply to this covers thirty very diverting pages of his "Second Reply to the Bishop of Worcester" which I have, with some regret, decided not to synopsis here since, although it contains some of Locke's most devastating and elegant dialectic, is not, in large parts, of sufficient immediate relevance to justify its inclusion. It will be enough to note that the point which we saw Locke denies viz. that a person after the resurrection must have the same body as that with which he perished and in which he sinned i.e. must "be the same man", is one which Stillingfleet chooses to elevate, on uncertain authority, into an article of faith. If there is to be resurrection of the dead, says Stillingfleet, (and Locke agrees that belief in so much is an article of Christian faith) then this can only mean resurrection of the actual identical body a person had when in like he sinned. The marrow of Locke's reply to this somewhat hazardous interpretation which, in the sequel, commits the Bishop. as Locke points out, to some odd (not to say hilarious) conclusions, is

contained in the following passages from the "Second Reply".<sup>1</sup>

i. (Works Vol.iv. p.332) "It is not necessary to the same person, that his body should always consist of the same numerical particles: this is demonstration, because the particles of the bodies of the same persons in this life change every moment, and your lordship cannot deny it...." And again ii. (op.cit. p.308) "The body he (i.e. any person) had, and did things in at five or fifteen, was no doubt his body, as much as that which he did things in at fifty was his body, though his body were not the very same body at these different ages; and so will the body, which he shall have after the resurrection, be his body, though it is not the very same with that which he had at five, or fifteen, or fifty. He that at three score is broken on the wheel, for a murder he committed at twenty, is punished for what he did in his body; though the body he has i.e. his body at three score, be not the same i.e. made up of the same individual particles of matter, that that body was, which he had forty years before. When your lordship has resolved what that same immutable he is, which

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<sup>1</sup> It may be as well to note that what in Campbell Fraser's footnotes to the "Essay" is made to look uncommonly like quotation from this work, is, in parts, drastically condensed paraphrase.



at the last judgement shall receive the things done in his body; your lordship will easily see, that the body he had, when an embryo in the womb, when a child playing in coats, when a man marrying a wife, and when bed-ridden dying of a consumption, and at last, which he shall have after his resurrection; are each of them his body, though neither of them be the same body, the one with the other." And, finally and succinctly iii. (op.cit. p.331) "I say, that a body made up of the same numerical parts of matter, is not necessary to the making of the same person; from whence it will indeed follow, that to the resurrection of the same person, the same numerical particles of matter are not required." And at the end of his discussion of this point in the "Second Reply", Locke thanks Stillingfleet, with perhaps less irony than he generally uses with that stultiloquent prelate, for redirecting his attention to the scriptural utterances on this matter, none of which contains "such express words ... as that 'the body shall rise or be raised' or the resurrection of 'the body'", and concludes that although he does not doubt that the dead shall be raised with some sort of bodies, his point that neither reason nor faith make this necessary is sufficiently made. And, indeed, from the point of view of reason at least, it could hardly be more trenchantly put.



146. This leads us, perhaps strangely, to consider another sort of criticism of Locke's contention that personal identity is in no way dependant on identity of body (and therefore of "man") but is dependant only on consciousness, which, although liable to come from contemporary sources, is more than a little akin to Stillingfleet's. It is, in general that since consciousness is inconceivable (or "unmeaning") apart from a body that is conscious, personal identity grounded in consciousness and quite apart from physical considerations is likewise inconceivable or unmeaning or nonsense. And since Locke does not in the "Essay" consider the case of a person never located in a body in this life (see II.xxvii.27), we may consider this criticism in relation to his discussion of personal identity in the next. (And this is legitimate, since such critics themselves agree that of the problems cognate to that of personal identity, that of personal "survival" is intrinsically the most interesting.) The contention we have to consider is, then, that if survival or resurrection of a person means anything, it means that the surviving or resurrected person is or becomes "conscious", and so far Locke and I, and the critics, may agree. But since consciousness consists to a very large degree in such things as having present to one,

visual, auditory, tactual, and other sensations, or, in such things as seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling etc., then it follows, according to this sort of view, that we cannot be conscious unless we have eyes "to see with", ears "to hear with", surfaces "to feel with" and so on. Therefore if there is survival after death or resurrection there must be a body -- surviving or resurrected -- completely equipped with this physiological apparatus, or we cannot be conscious i.e. we cannot survive or be resurrected as persons, therefore personal identity cannot be founded in consciousness alone. And so there is discovered to us an instructive situation in which we can observe the apologists of the Roman Catholic and Logico-Analytical Churches sharing their dogmas. Now, as for myself, I must confess that I have never seen any force whatsoever in the argument that a "sensation" or an "idea of sensation" is "inconceivable" apart from a physical organ that conditions or mediates or originates that sensation. A sensation, or an idea of sensation, is, in the first instance and as far as our presented experience goes, what it is, a phenomenon in consciousness, and it is so in Locke's account -- he repeatedly disavows having any "theory" about sense-perception -- and, to my mind, in any reasonable and unbiased account.

That sensations have as necessary correlates to their occurrence in consciousness, certain physical organs actually present and causally inextricable from their occurrence, is an account which has, most assuredly, the pragmatic sanction of its usefulness to physicians, oculists, and others in the practical way of things. But it has, as necessary, neither this authority nor any other in an open-minded epistemological or phenomenological analysis of experience. If we allow ourselves to expect -- as we do -- that the tyros of philosophy can compass this point in dealing, for example, with the doctrine of Representative Perception (e.g. "Are the findings of physiologists conclusive in explaining visual sensation?"), then we should reasonably be able to expect its contemporary hierophants to be able to compass it as well. It seems to me that the assertion that consciousness, in terms of sensation, is "inconceivable" without actual physical organs, is plainly an untruth; and I am inclined to regard the assertion that eyes in good mechanical order and as described in Gray's "Anatomy" (or whichever is now the standard text-book) are necessary "for there to be" what we call visual sensation in any consciousness, as no more than a piece of high priori, mythopoeic legislation of a sort typical, in our time, of

more Curias than the Roman. This matter, however, can rest, since I can no more be instructed by someone else as to what it is possible for me to conceive than I can instruct anyone in the same matter, and consequently the criticism and its answer become no more than contrary assertions of what purports to be fact. I can only imitate Locke and direct people who hold such views to an inspection of their own experience, lest they may have overlooked some of their own powers of conceiving and analysing or have let them disappear under an a priori fig-leaf. So, as far as this sort of criticism is concerned, the ground of personal identity may continue to be located in consciousness per se, since those that hold these views apparently have, like George IV. and the men without "moral" experience, anomalous experience.

147. At this point we may conveniently pause to make something of a summary of the conclusions we have drawn from Locke's account of identity so far:

- I. The identity of an "idea" i.e. of any existing individuum of which we are conscious, is grounded in our intuition of the idea's identity with itself at a moment i.e. within a specious present (paras 39-58).

II. The identity of a continuant is grounded in the relation we apprehend between successive appearances of an idea or complex of ideas in duration (paras 39-58).

III. The identity of any continuant which is an organism is grounded in the cooperation of its parts toward the maintenance of its proper function i.e. the maintenance of animal or vegetable life (paras 96-103).

Lemma 1. (from II.i.3 & IV.ix.2): Consciousness can be located in an organism, because consciousness may include bodily sensation;

.. (& from II.xxvii.11)

Lemma 2. A thinking being may be embodied in an organism, because it is constituted by having consciousness.

IV. (a) The identity of a human body is the identity of an organism. (paras 96-103).

(b) The identity of a man is the identity of a human body. (ibid)

And note:- "Human" identity is the equivalent of "identity of a man", but the term is used when the "man" is regarded from the side of the consciousness (see Lemma 2) at any time annexed to the "man as organism".

V. The identity of a spirit, or intellectual substance, is grounded in and confined to the consciousness which is "now" to any thinking being (para.89.)

VI. The identity of a Self or Person is grounded in and confined to the continuing consciousness which the Self or Person has (paras 106-134) with these consequences:



(a) that what is never presented in that consciousness is not part of the Self or Person (120)

(b) that whatever is contained in that consciousness as "experienced by" the Self or Person is indefeasibly a part of the Self or Person (para 134).

These seem to be our main conclusions about identity, together with the two necessary auxiliary propositions also obtained from the text of the "Essay". They have some important corollaries which we may summarise as well:-

- A. The same spirit, or intellectual substance, may, or may not, be embodied in the same organism (from V., IVb & Lemma 2).
- B. The same spirit, or intellectual substance, may, or may not, underlie the continuing consciousness of the same Self or Person (from V. & VI.).
- C. The same Self or Person may, or may not, occupy the same human body (from VI., IVa. & Lemma 1).
- D. The same Self or Person may, or may not, appear as the same man (from VI., IVb., & Lemma 1).
- E. The same Self or Person may have annexed to it diverse intellectual substances together with the same physical organism (i.e. human body or "man") (from VI., V., IVa & b. & Lemma 1).
- F. The same Self or Person may have annexed to it diverse intellectual substances and diverse physical organisms (human bodies or "men") (from VI., V., Lemma 1, IVa & b. & III -- the grounds of identity being all diverse.).
- G. The converse of D holds good.

- H. The contrary in respect of substance and organism in E., holds good.
- I. The contrary in respect of substance and organism in F., holds good.
- J. If spirit or intellectual substance is known, it is known (N.B.) only by intuition at a moment i.e. within a specious present (from I. & V.).
- K. If identical Self or Person is known, it is (N.B.) apprehended as a relation between successive appearances (from II. & VI.).

The above constitutes, then, a table of the relations between, and mutual inclusions and exclusions among, these identities which in experience we discriminate as: Self and/or Person, Spirits (i.e. intellectual substances), Men, human bodies, Organisms (consisting of material substances), Continuants, and mere Individua. It is interesting to note that the corollaries, which for the sake of brevity are given above as derived directly from the original propositions obtained from the exposition of Locke's text, are themselves completely consistent with the text of his account and are verifiable there passim. Up till this point at least, the material does not seem to have imposed linguistic inconsistency upon him -- unless there is something of this sort involved in corollaries J. & K. above, which is a question we have yet to examine.

148. Among these distinctions, one which we noted before as being perhaps disturbing to accepted views was that between Man and Person, demonstrated by the example of the Prince and the Cobbler (para.142 above). Further to this example, Locke observes (II.xxvii.15): "The body too goes to the making of the man, and would, I guess, to every one determine the man in this case, wherein the soul with all its princely thoughts about it, would not make another man; but he would be the same cobbler to every one besides himself." And the point here that there may be a great deal of difference between what the Cobbler-embodied Prince may experience of himself as Self to himself and what other people may experience of him as a person, leads as conveniently to an important distinction we have to examine. In the summary of our conclusions in the previous paragraph, we spoke indifferently of the identity of "Self" or Person": this distinction we have now to examine is that which Locke, in the latter part of his account in Book II., makes between Self and Person.

In 25 & 26 of II.xxvii, having granted that it is more probable than not that the consciousness of the same self or person is annexed to one spiritual substance -- although there is, on his shewing, no evidence whatever for this

except, perhaps, that it would make the situation tidier and more aesthetically pleasing (see B.H.I. of the Summary) -- Locke goes on to remark: "This every intelligent being, sensible of happiness or misery, must grant -- that there is something that is himself, that he is concerned for, and would have happy; that this self has existed in a continued duration more than one instant ..... and may be the same self, by the same consciousness continued on for the future. .... In all which account of self, the same numerical substance is not considered as making the same self; but the same continued consciousness..... (and) anything united to it by a consciousness of former actions, makes also a part of the same self, which is the same both then and now..... (26) Person, as I take it, is the name for this self.

Wherever a man finds what he calls himself, there, I think, another may say is the same person." And a convenient illustration of what this distinction may mean is the hypothetical one we noted before of the migrant soul of the Prince which became embodied in the Cobbler's body. If this happened, we saw, the presence of the Prince's consciousness did not make "another man", because, Locke says: "he would be the same cobbler to every one besides himself." Sameness of consciousness, in other words, can only be known



within that consciousness. What the (Cobbler)-PRINCE experienced of himself as Self is quite a different thing from what other conscious beings experienced of the COBBLER-(Prince) as Person -- and yet, according to Locke, the terms ("I-a-Prince" = Self, and "he-a-Cobbler" = Person) refer to the same thing. Likewise what I experience of "me" as Self, is necessarily different from what other people experience of "me" as Person. To any other consciousness, the identity of a Self can only be inferred from whatever, visible to (i.e. contained within) the first consciousness, makes up to that consciousness, the organic accompaniments of a Person -- or, in less cautious terms, we can only infer to other men's identical selves from the behaviour of their bodies. But this does not mean that we merely have to go back on the previous account and now say that, be the identity or self what it may, the identity of person is merely the same as identity of a man, or even of a human body. For, Locke tells us, II.xxvii.26: "It ("person") is a forensic term, appropriating actions and their merit..... This personality extends itself beyond present existence to what is past, only by consciousness" -- i.e. not by continuing identity of the body from which alone others can infer to identity -- "whereby it becomes concerned and



accountable; owns and imputes to itself past actions" -- which others impute for quite different reasons -- "just upon the same ground and for the same reason as it does the present." And from this we see that our "forensic" term is to apply, as is quite proper in view of its derivation, to a being who is accountable for his actions, and accountability for action presumably means -- remembering that Locke refers the term to what "another may say is the same person" -- accountable is an inter-personal way e.g. as before a tribunal. But, on the other hand, the identity of this being who is accountable to a tribunal is located in something which is utterly inaccessible to any tribunal (less, perhaps, the final one) viz. its own consciousness. A person's accountability is established by "his conscience accusing or excusing him (II.xxvii.22)" and what is not in his consciousness is not in his conscience and, if it cannot be revived therein, is no part of the person -- whatever may be the evidence of other witnesses. And this obviously presents a difficulty. If it is said, as by Leibniz, that the identity of a person can be established by means other than an appeal to the person's consciousness, in that for all practical purposes, it can be established by external signs e.g. from the parts of the organism, which would be sufficient,

no doubt, for a law court, the answer is that all that has been established is the identity of a "human" body, and the "practical purposes" which this satisfies are quite beside the point. What is involved may be more fully illustrated by referring to Campbell Fraser's note on p.468 of his edition, where he observes: "it is implied that a murderer for example is not accountable for a murder of which his organism was the instrument, if a consciousness of it, as his own past act, cannot be awakened in him! It follows (unless conscious experience is ultimately indelible) that any man who has forgotten that he committed a murder, did not personally commit it. Who, in that case, was the murderer?" And he leaves the question, presumably in incredulity, rhetorical. But it is by no means unanswerable. The murderer was the person who then occupied the organism which was the vital instrument that performed the lethal act, and which person no longer exists -- if consciousness cannot (repeat cannot) be awakened in the appropriate respect in the person who at present occupies the same organism, even although it may be abundantly established that it is the same organism. If the present occupant of the organism cannot annex to his consciousness the memory of the act, then, whatever any human court may do in lieu, justice in the sense of retribution for

the particular act, cannot be done until Resurrection and Judgement -- which last consideration, of course, saves the situation from Locke's point of view, since at final judgement (whatever we understand by that) there will be no "fatal error". For anyone who cannot share Locke's convictions, the conclusion must be that since the certain identity of that to which the forensic term person applies, cannot be established by anyone but the person, injustice may indeed very often be done, and that -- in default of a latter day rectification of the case -- the world and our experience of it is, however displeasingly, like that. It may be, on the other hand, that it is very infrequently that such cases really happen, but one does not have to be a particularly voracious reader of the more widely circulated sort of newspaper to be aware that a large number of defence pleas in processes concerning murder contain reference to precisely such a complete loss of "past experience" (as the prosecution alleges it to be) from consciousness -- and the readiness to make this appeal might suggest that there is something in the common experience of mankind that gives credence to Locke's account, however inconvenient it may be for jurists. At the worst, after all, his account involves no more than the admission that human justice is not very

reliable, and since, on his view, it is ultimately corrigible, Campbell Fraser's incredulous leaving of his own question unanswered might be interpreted as shewing a lack of confidence in the competence of the final assize, which is almost as unbecoming in him as in Berkeley. In other words, Locke's account may not be true, but it is not so improbable that it can be dismissed with an exclamation mark and a rhetorical question. Locke himself provides, by the way, the prophylaxis, from a practical point of view, against an outbreak of this deep amnesia, which seems to be an occupational disorder among assassins, in his consideration of the case of the blameworthy drunkard who, although not again conscious of what he did in his inebriation, is "justly punished" because although the "fact" is proved against him -- in the forensic sense i.e. his organism was at least the instrument of some malefaction -- lack of consciousness cannot be proved for him. If it is said that this is a weak argument (with which assessment I agree) and that "proof" is here a question-begging red herring, the answer lies in yielding the point and observing that what is being discussed here, in any case, are practical expedients for the use of well-intentioned magistrates, with which, strictly, we have no concern and which were, strictly, no concern of Locke's --



although I suspect it may have been the Senior Civil Servant in Locke that led him to spend time on these forensic consequences at the expense of others rather more germane to his enquiry. It is indeed difficult to decide just how much importance Locke saw in this distinction, or how far he may have followed out its consequences. The distinction made in his statement: "Whenever a man finds what he calls himself, there, I think, another may say is the same person" is, I think, a proper one, and it is, quite certainly I think, a distinction. Professor Aaron says (op.cit. p.141): "He identifies self with person; to myself I am a self, to another a person." And, no doubt, he does try to "identify" them, but it seems to me more important to emphasise the distinction which is imposed on him in the attempt to do so, in the hope that it may clarify some of the difficulties which Professor Aaron conceals in the second part of his sentence -- the forensic sort of which we have already looked at. Professor Gibson says (op.cit.p.116-117): "..... Locke treats 'self' and 'person' as having the same denotation. The only difference in their signification is a difference of point of view." and I am rather happier with this phrasing; but the consequence of the distinction brought



about by the difference of point of view, seems to me to need more examination than Locke, at least explicitly, gives it. We are concerned to find what are the differences between the experience "I" have of "me" as Self, the experience (if any) "I" have of "me" as Person, and the experience any other Person can have of "me" as Person; that no other person can have experience of "me" as Self, seems already sufficiently established. And I suspect that when this has been done, we may find that "self" and "person" have the same denotation only because the mechanism of the language to which we are confined (Cp. the Introduction to this thesis) is such that it makes us refer to them together in a way which makes misleadingly identical what is either diverse or "identical" in some odd but linguistically undifferentiated sense.

I wish, however, to postpone the examination of these question, which will represent the final form of our interpretation of Locke's account, until we have considered the account of the Self in Book IV.

VII.

THE ACCOUNT OF OUR KNOWLEDGE OF OUR OWN EXISTENCE IN BOOK IV.

149. There is, of course, no account of Personal Identity as such in Book IV. But there is an account, brief but important, of our experience of what we are maintaining Locke distinguishes from "person" i.e. "self", and it is contained in chapter ix of IV. "Of Our Threefold Knowledge of Existence." In this brief chapter Locke deals with our knowledge of the existence of things, of the existence of God, and of "our own existence", and both the brevity and the importance of the passage on our knowledge of ourselves makes it desirable to quote it in full: (IV.ix.3) "As for our own existence, we perceive it so plainly and so certainly, that it neither needs nor is capable of any proof. For nothing can be more evident to us than our own existence. I think, I reason, I feel pleasure or pain: can any of these be more evident to me than my own existence? If I doubt of all other things, that very doubt makes me perceive my own existence, and will not suffer me to doubt of that. For if I know I feel pain, it is evident I have as certain perception of my own existence as of

the existence of the pain I feel: or if I know I doubt I have as certain perception of the existence of the thing doubting, as of that thought which I call doubt. Experience then convinces us, that we have an intuitive knowledge of our own existence, and so an internal infallible perception that we are. In every act of sensation, reasoning, or thinking, we are conscious to ourself of our own being; and, in this matter, come not short of the highest degree of certainty." This is obviously a very different matter from the elaborate and copious account of personal identity in xxvii. of II., but that Locke regarded it as of the first importance we can gather from the fact that upon this he was prepared to rest our knowledge of the existence of God. Having rejected the "ontological proof" -- implicitly in the "Essay" and quite explicitly in the subsequent correspondence with Stillingfleet -- on the grounds that ideas, existing as such, are not always evidence of real existence, "real existence" i.e. of God, "can be proved only by real existence", and the real existence which proves the existence of God is, as is developed in x. of IV., the real existence of the Self.

150. That Locke should choose to give two such different

accounts of what is generally supposed to be the same thing or, even on his own account, two things so very intimately connected as Self and Person, should not, in view of the present interpretation, surprise us; for it only amounts to the fact that he is drawing our attention either to the same thing or two facets of the same thing by adopting two different but apposite descriptions, in a quite characteristic way. The resemblance of this latter account, even to the examples, to the celebrated passage in which Descartes enunciates the "Cogito", has often been remarked. But this is no more than to point out that here, for his specific purpose i.e. the description of our experience of our Selves (as distinct from our experience as persons), Locke finds Cartesian terms useful and adequate -- as he found, apparently, they were not in the case of experience "as person". Although in one of his letters Locke remarks: "For having resolved to examine Humane Understanding, and the ways of our knowledge, not by others' opinions, but by what I could from my own observations collect myself, I have purposely avoided the reading of all books that treated any way of the subject, that so I might have nothing to bias me any way", we know from his own testimony and Lady Masham's, that to Descartes he regarded himself as owing "the



great obligation of my first deliverance from the unintelligible way of talking of the philosophy in use in the Schools in his time", and consequently, the reading of Descartes' book and the considerable impression it made on him being antecedent to his self-denying ordinance about other men's books, it is not at all surprising that he should use Descartes' terms as the most appropriate and authoritative in drawing our attention to this crucially important part of our experience.

151. Now what, we might ask, is the main difference, apart from length and elaboration, in these two account of our experience of ourselves which Locke gives us? And it seems to me that this difference lies in the way in which we know, or are aware of, the Self -- which we tend to speak of indifferently as the same thing, whichever sort of account we are using. The question is, are these accounts used to direct our attention to two different things in our experience, despite the fact that in common usage the same terms are applied to them, or does each account in fact direct our attention to the same thing? If it is urged that there is a strong case to be made for saying that Locke identifies Self and Person, i.e.



that both accounts point to the same part of experience, it must also be remembered that the "same thing" is regarded by Locke at least from two different points of view, or in two different aspects. And this means that, in terms of the ground of the difference we noted, the question is whether that which we "know" in terms of this second account, is the same as that which we "know" in terms of the account in Book II.

152. In trying to answer this, we can note in the first place, that in the account in Book IV the knowledge we have, of whatever it is, is "intuitive knowledge". That is to say, the object of such knowledge is revealed directly, unmediated either by an idea or the discernment of a relation between ideas. Nor does this involve a contradiction, as might be urged; for if we allege it does, then we are making over again the sort of misinterpretation of Locke that we spent so much time putting right in considering T.H. Green's criticism. In the section on Locke's use of the term "existence", we concluded that his account did not confine the class of existents to ideas as natural facts, but included also two other orders of existents viz. "things" and "minds", which were known mediately by means of ideas in the various ways we then

investigated; and here we are given something else, other than ideas, which exists, or at the least a different way of describing one of the things, other than ideas as natural facts, which exists. Admittedly, for Locke, the term "idea" covers whatever is discriminable in consciousness. And here we have come upon something discriminable in consciousness which is said not to be an idea. In face of this, we can either develop Locke's usage in a way he did not choose, and say that this, being discriminable in consciousness, is an "idea" (in inverted commas) which is, as a matter of fact, different from all other ideas -- and this is quite harmless, if we make clear what we are doing -- since it is only putting one limit on the use of a term, and such limits (as Locke is quite clear) are purely arbitrary and are only convenient in referring to an experience which their adoption or non-adoption does not in the slightest degree affect; but since this involves us in saying "this idea" is a "real existent" in a sense other than that in which every idea is a real existent (as a natural fact), it would seem better to adopt Locke's own more convenient method and say that this presentation is non-ideal and sui generis.

If it is the case that what were referred to in that earlier account as "minds" are again being referred to here

differently, it means only that the term "minds" and the sort of terms being used in the present account, overlap, and this is of no consequence provided that both sets of terms turn our attention in the required direction; and if this same thing, like some others in our experience, were presented simultaneously through different avenues, the double description would be required and would certainly be characteristic of Locke's method. It may be, on the other hand, that the object of the intuitive sort of knowledge now being spoken of, is different from the "mind" or "intellectual substance" mediately known in and through every idea of reflection.

153. In investigating this further, we should recollect that every perception and volition which is a constitutive idea of our consciousness is accompanied by a discriminable idea of reflection which is the perception of our perceiving or willing; and that the accompanying ideas of reflection have each, as one of their minimal concomitants, an imprecise awareness of spiritual or cognitive substance. We should note too that in this account in Book IV the occasions on which we have the special sort of intuitive knowledge are given as occasions of "thinking", "feeling pain or pleasure",

"reasoning", "doubting" etc., that is to say, occasions on which we have a perception present to us; so that Locke's amended and amplified account is that when we perceive anything, in the widest sense, the self-conscious consciousness of some particular phenomenon which we have, includes both the imprecise, mediated awareness of the mind that thinks in that moment of consciousness, as the spiritual substance revealed in the idea of reflection whose object is the particular perception, and the unmediated intuition of the existent self whose perception it is, and whose idea the "accompanying" idea itself, is: and the question is whether Locke is trying to tell us that the Self which is intuited and the mind or spiritual substance which is known mediately, are the same thing. Further to this question we can note that whereas the mediated awareness we have is, observably, imprecise and obscure, the intuitive knowledge is described as coming "not short of the highest degree of certainty." Is it, then, that the latter is knowledge, as a different and higher level, of the same thing of which we have an obscure awareness at a lower level in the former?

154. I think the answer to this question is No. For one thing, Locke's accounts both of memory and of spiritual



substance are against such an interpretation, and since it is contended here that Locke does not gratuitously contradict himself, we must try to find out whether this account in Book IV necessarily contradicts these former accounts i.e. whether it is indicating something in experience which is only to be described inconsistently in language, or whether it can be interpreted consistently with the other accounts -- which I think it can. In our examination of the account of memory, we found that when an idea -- a perception of some kind -- is remembered, it is remembered together with the idea of reflection which accompanied it, on its original occurrence, as a perception of the perceiving; and that one of the minimal concomitant ideas included in that idea, was one "of" (i.e. revealing) thinking substance, and that this included (concomitant) idea was also remembered; but that the thinking substance which on the original occurrence was revealed, was not itself revealed in the recollected idea "of" it (see para. 123 above); so that the identity of the "present" thinker and the "past" thinker was not grounded in identity of perceived substances or of perceived (i.e. presented and recollected) "ideas of substance", but on the agreement, i.e. identification, of what we called the "I"-qualification of these ideas. And if the analysis is carefully rehearsed,



we see that the "I"-qualification does not consist in the revelation of the same thinking substance in a present and a remembered idea, but in the perception, as part of the present instance of memory, of the same qualifications of the presented and recollected "ideas of substance" (themselves concomitants of the presented and recollected ideas of reflection); and that qualification is, it now appears, that of "being the particular idea of substance which was an object (and part of a more complex object) to the Self or "I" which was intuited then and which is the same Self or "I" which is intuited now. This is not to say that the Self or "I" which was intuited then, is now, in the present instance of remembering, intuited also as it was then, because remembering is not intuiting; remembering consists in the perception of a certain relation between ideas, but intuiting (as used here) means the knowing of a real existent non-ideally. But what is involved is this: that the Self or "I" which is intuited now, qualifies the idea of thinking substance which is a concomitant of that idea of reflection which is, in turn, the "perception of the present remembering", in such a way that it seems to agree with the recollected idea of thinking substance, which is the concomitant of the recollected idea of reflection accompanying the remembered perception. If, perhaps hazardingly, we try to make the point

clearer by using a metaphor, we can say that in any moment of consciousness which is an instance of remembering, the Self or "I" which is intuited in that moment (as in all moments) "puts its particular stamp upon" the idea of thinking substance which is part of its unavoidable perception that it is now remembering, so that agreement can obtain between that present idea revealing thinking substance or "a mind" and its opposite number in the remembered complex, because the latter has, in the past, "been stamped with the same particular stamp". This is to say that the Self which is the object of intuition is not itself "remembered": what are remembered are ideas carrying the "marks" which "shew that they were" objects to the same unique, intuited Self. The Self intuited, is always the Self now. This means that a Self may have as the contents of its consciousness, thoughts and perceptions "thought by" and "perceived by" different "minds" (i.e. thinking or spiritual substances). But this we can hardly find startling, as it is no more than a re-statement of what, as we have already found, Locke tells us about spiritual substance in its relation to the Self -- including the fact that it is possible that it is the same mind or thinking substance that is involved every time; but since whether or not it is, is something we can never know either

in perception, or by memory, or, apparently, by intuition, it must remain irrelevant. Consequently, since it is clear from this further examination of memory that we can know that the Self which is conscious now, and the Self which was conscious then, are identical, but that we cannot know that the mind which thinks now and the mind which thought then, are identical, we must conclude that, consistently with his account of memory and spiritual substance, Locke is not identifying the Self we know in intuition with the thinking substance we are aware of in every idea of reflection. "Mind" is the thinking substance which is present in any moment of consciousness and which makes it to be consciousness, but it is not that which differentiates any moment of consciousness and makes it specifically "mine" or somebody else's. If metaphors are again not too dangerous, we might say that "mind" is the "medium" of all consciousness indifferently, or is what provides undifferentiated consciousness as the "matrix" from which unique personal consciousnesses emerge -- under conditions involving the presence of real existent Selves.

155. It is possible that confusion might arise at this point owing to the facts (i) that we have previously spoken



precisely of intellectual substance as being intuited at a moment (see Corollary J. in the summary in para.147 above) and also, much earlier, of any idea's "identity with itself" being intuited at a moment i.e. "within a specious present" (see para.58 above), and (ii) that we now seem to be confining intuition to the knowledge of something which is not intellectual substance. But that there is a distinction in the usages that puts the matter beyond confusion, is surely clear enough from the fact that Selves are being described as real existents known directly (i.e. non-ideally), and spiritual substances are being described as real existents known only by and through ideas, and there is no need to confuse the intuition of an idea (perhaps revealing a real existent) with the intuition of a real existent per se. The "intuition" of an idea, as such, and of an idea's identity with itself -- including the idea "of thinking substance" -- is, as we found in the section on the General Notion of Identity, a sort of perception which is different from all other perceptions in respect of its special relation to the mode of duration i.e. it referred to perception in a "first order" duration within "the specious present", or "moment", or "instant". The "intuition" of Self is not, apparently, so related to the mode of duration, and it is not so because the Self, being non-ideal,

is not (N.B.) subject to that mode. It is true that if thinking substance is known (see Coroll.J.), it is known only by intuition at a moment, and that Self is likewise known only by intuition at a moment, but the point we are establishing is that the intuitions do not have the same object. The Self that is intuited is not the thinking substance or mind that is intuited at the same moment.

156. We observed that the main difference between the account in Book II and the account in Book IV lay in how "self" (used very loosely) is known, and by examining how it is known, we have come a little closer to finding whether or not what is known, according to each account, is the same thing or different. The investigation was undertaken principally to help with establishing what the relation is between "Self" and "Person", and as a result of it, it is suggested that "Self" applies to the self we know immediately and certainly in the present moment and only as it is in a present moment. This is obviously not what we know in terms of the first account, which is of Person. Whatever other relation exists, then, between a "Self" and the "Person", they are related in being diverse, in that Self is known only in the present, and Person is known only in consciousness.



extended beyond the present -- and this is so even if the Self known in a present moment is the Self intuited on the occasion of a perception which is a remembering of its own actions or perceptions; because, a Self which is intuited is always a "Self thinking", or a "Self remembering", or a "Self doubting" and so on, and, consequently, if the Self intuited happens to be, as in the example, a "Self remembering its past actions", it is, in effect, intuited as a "Self being conscious of part of 'its own' Person", but it is still intuited and experienced as it is now -- whatever (and however "reflexive") the nature of the consciousness indicated by the qualifying participle.

And from this we can see that we have an answer to the question that was raised incidentally in para.148 above viz. what are the differences between what "I" experience of "me" as Self, what "I" experience of "me" as Person, and what anybody else experiences of "me" as Person? And the answer is that the difference between them lies in the fact that what "I" experience of "me" as Self is something contained in a non-durational mode of consciousness, while what "I" experience of "me" as Person is contained in consciousness in and confined to the mode of duration, and in the fact that what "I" experience of "me" as Self and Person is strictly confined

to "my" consciousness, while what anybody else experiences of "me" as Person ("me" as Self being inaccessible to him) is confined to what he recognises in his durational consciousness as "my" organic concomitants, which, in his recognising of them thus and as such, are parts of what "he" experiences of "him" as Person.

157. There is something else that must be made explicit in this connection -- although I hope it will have become obvious from the preceding paragraphs -- and it is this: although I experience what I call myself (since language still imposes this sort of usage on us) differently as Self and Person, I can experience myself simultaneously, though differently, as Self and Person. For, as above, although my experience of myself as Self is non-durational, it occurs on the occasion of a "being conscious", and if the content of that "being conscious" is a remembering of what makes me Person (i.e. is part of the extended consciousness which is the ground of my personal identity), then simultaneously I am aware of myself as Self and Person. I have, then, simultaneous double-presentation of myself in experience; and simultaneous double-presentation is not (cp. the case of "substance") a new phenomenon to us in our examination of

Locke's account. But we must be careful to note that the simultaneous double-presentation in this case is of Self-and-Person as "myself" and not of Self-and-"mind" as "myself" (cp. paras 153-4 above.). From this we can see that Locke's distinction between Self and Person made in xxvii. of II. and reinforced by the account in ix. of IV., is quite consonant with his original description of person which was that "person" is "a thinking intelligent being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing, in different times and places....", for the "considering itself as itself, the same thinking thing" is the function of the intuited Self, and the "reason and reflection" and extension to "different times and places" are the functions of the Person constituted by the consciousness (reasoning, reflecting etc.) which is the occasion of the "considering itself as itself". Likewise, this distinction which is imposed by the double-presentation in experience, is consonant with his suggestion: "Whenever a man finds what he calls himself, there, I think, another may say is the same person.", because, the consciousness which is the occasion on which, intuitively, a man "finds himself" may be constituted in part by bodily sensation of and from the organism (his human body) annexed to the consciousness, and of parts

of the rest of the physical world as related (spatially etc.) to that organism; and this sensational sort of consciousness is grounded in, and, through the relations the organism has with other things, forms part of, a situation of which another may be conscious, so that the "other" has, as part of his consciousness, sensational and other awareness of the same things which are known by, and which constitute in part, the first consciousness which is, itself, the occasion of the (first) Self's being intuited i.e. what the "other" is conscious of as the organic part of the first person is, in fact, part of the personal consciousness which is the occasion of the first Self's being intuited; so that when the first Self "is found", the other, as it is quite proper for Locke to say, finds what is, indeed, part of the same thing. And this is to say no more than would be expressed, if we used politer but less cautious terms, in the statement that when another man sees my body, he is then conscious of something of which I am conscious too, and that this consciousness of mine is part of what allows me to know myself (as Self), while his consciousness of the same thing allows him to know me as a Person. Consequently, when Locke's various accounts are explicated, they are seen to tally.



There is, I think, something more to be said about the nature of what we experience as Self, and its relation to Person, here distinguished from it; but I wish to reserve this for the concluding survey.



VIII.

BISHOP BUTLER'S OBJECTIONS.

158. In this penultimate section I intend examining, for a number of reasons, the criticism of Locke's view of Personal Identity which are contained in Butler's Dissertation "Of Personal Identity" appended to "The Analogy of Religion".

In the first place, Butler's reputation as a subtle and sagacious moral philosopher lays on us the obligation of examining what he has to say; for in the Introduction to this Study we noted that Personal Identity is of the first relevance in Ethics, and here is an instance of a distinguished moral philosopher explicitly examining the subject.

In the second place, it will be useful to review the discussion as it has developed so far, and before drawing any final conclusions; and an effective way of doing this is to examine a compendious criticism, answering it if possible. Butler's Dissertation particularly recommends itself for this purpose, for it is explicitly concerned with the topic as it is discussed in the "Essay", it is of manageable bulk, and its author keeps to the points that matter -- as we might

expect of the only one of Locke's near contemporaries (with a possible exception in Berkeley) who approaches his own intellectual stature.

Thirdly, despite his grasp of where it is that the problems lie, and the trenchancy of his exposition, Butler is illuminatingly wrong on the two most important issues, and is so in a way that emphasises how much Locke was in advance of his successors in ways which are particularly apparent in the study of Personal Identity.

And, finally, the failure of Butler's criticism shews with an increased clarity, which is commensurate with the critic's ability, that if Locke is to be read, then he must be read entire and with an attention that is appropriate to the patience with which he thought through what he says in the "Essay" -- although even this precaution is not infallible, as in the case of T.H. Green. For of all the philosophical classics, with the exception perhaps of Kant's first "Critique", "An Essay Concerning Humane Understanding" is the one least capable of being condensed, summarised or anthologised for the benefit of students or critics in a hurry. And it is the one least safely read at second hand, for whatever Locke's "philosophy" was -- if we like to call it that, for he was no systematiser -- it is most assuredly not what, with surprising

unanimity, the historians of philosophy tell us it is. Well might Locke exclaim to Edward Stillingfleet: "Truly, my Lord, my book hath most unlucky stars!", and seldom, we might add, has a thinker suffered so much (See e.g. para.164 below) from the quite original sins of his followers -- or from the sins of those whom the historians of philosophy choose to designate as his followers for the sake, presumably, of the tidiness of their chronicle.

We must now turn to the examination of the points -- not all of them against Locke -- which Butler raises.

159. The first and most general point we may note is that Butler was well aware of the importance of the question about Personal Identity for temporal morality and for the maintenance of a faith that requires assurance of continued existence after death. This is apparent from the first sentence of the "Analogy" itself, wherein Butler, having noted as much, sends "whoever thinks it worth while" to the discussion in his appended Dissertation -- the suggestion being that all plain men and good Christians can take it for granted that such "strange difficulties" are unreal, and that the author can accordingly proceed with his justification of God's ways to man without further attention to these subtleties. We might

perhaps remark that there is about this sentence, and about the Dissertation as a whole, a tone which is not at all characteristic of Butler at his best -- as in the Sermons. There is an asperity and a touch of arrogance that reminds us rather uncomfortably of Stillingfleet, despite the patent difference in ability. It may be, however, that he is to be forgiven this in view of the anxiety about a facile scepticism (made manifest in the Introduction) which perplexed him in his cure of souls c. 1736.

Turning to a more particular examination, we can note that the points he raises fall conveniently into ten sections:

(i). In the first paragraph (Works. Ed. Gladstone p.387), having once again denigrated these "strange perplexities" and the "stranger solutions" offered to them, he remarks that although the attempt to define Personal Identity, as in the similar cases of similitude and equality, "would but perplex it", there is "no difficulty at all in ascertaining the idea". And we can pause before going any further to observe that this at least is not directed against Locke, for Locke makes no attempt to define, but most consistently confines himself to describing what we experience of our selves and our personal identity. Anything which might be called "definition" in some more portentous sense than the issue of a plain,

historical account, appears only in the hypothetical alternative accounts which he considers for the purpose of shewing their inadequacy. It is true that here and there he makes such round assertions as that a person "is a thinking intelligent being", but that is only to delimit roughly, and in intelligible terms, the sphere of discourse within which he goes on to elaborate his description. And such description, I take it, is what Butler means by "ascertaining the idea".

Having observed, then, that in his practice Locke does not err by introducing "strange perplexities" in this respect -- i.e. by any attempt to provide a definition of an impossible degree of nicety, we can go on to see what Butler's own account of how we "ascertain the idea" (which is a harmless activity) consists in, and how it differs from and corrects Locke's. And continuing in para.2 (the para. numbers are taken from Gladstone's edition) Butler says: "For as, upon two triangles being compared or viewed together, there arises to the mind the idea of similitude ..... so likewise, upon comparing the consciousness of one's self, or one's own existence, in any two moments, there as immediately arises to the mind the idea of personal identity." And nothing, I would submit, could agree more closely with Locke's account. This is, indeed, an admirable short statement of his view



might well be inserted in the text of the "Essay" as a marginal heading. Butler goes on to point his simile by remarking that just as we discern the similitude of the triangles "so the latter comparison gives us not only the idea of personal identity, but also shows us the identity of ourselves in these two moments; the present, suppose, and that immediately past; or the present and that a month, a year, or twenty years past." So that, here at least, Butler is preaching to the converted. His account not only agrees with Locke's but shews that, perhaps independently achieved, his view of the nature of memory is at least similar to Locke's. His account differs from Locke's only in being less adequate in that it does not take note of the errors which, as a matter of fact, can be and are made in the making of such comparisons; but, considering the scope and purpose of the Dissertation, this, it might be said, is not a matter for censure. On the other hand, had he appreciated that the consequences of precisely the odd and anomalous cases are of first importance in this matter, he might have found it prudent at least to note them. That his view of memory, although apparently the same in outline, is less adequate than Locke's -- at least as Locke's is according to my exposition, which I am assuming to be correct -- will become apparent shortly.

160. (ii). In those points he raises which I shall include under our second heading, Butler becomes rather more formidable. He writes: "But though consciousness of what is past does thus ascertain our personal identity to ourselves, yet to say, that it makes personal identity, or is necessary to our being the same persons, is to say, that a person has not existed a single moment, nor done one action, but what he can remember; indeed none but what he reflects on." And this, we can see, consists for one thing of the objection, also entertained by Berkeley, which we noted before viz. that the ground of Personal Identity cannot be actual consciousness, for then I am not now the person I was ten years ago unless I am now remembering myself as I was then. That this is not, in any case, Locke's view, we saw before. But if we attend closely to Butler here, we can see that not only does he reject actual consciousness as the ground of identity, but also potential consciousness. In the quotation above he implies that it cannot be grounded in "what we can remember." (I think it unlikely that Butler's objection contains any of the suggestion of his brother Bishop's. The notion that the grounding of Personal Identity in potential consciousness might produce a situation in which "for aught we know" all persons are the same -- a view disposed of in

para.125 above -- is, I suspect, rather too fanciful for Butler.) His objection to it, as a ground, seems to be that it is in some way inadequate. But if such extended consciousness may not be the ground, what else is needed? Butler admits that such consciousness gives us what experience we have of Personal Identity, and if what constitutes it is not known in or from experience, then, provided it is at all accessible, it must be known by some other means. It cannot be quite inaccessible, for we have already been told that "consciousness of what is past does thus ascertain our personal identity to ourselves". What more he wants is perhaps indicated in his next sentence, although the sequence of his thought between it and the preceding one does not appear very close to me. He continues: "And one should really think it self-evident, that consciousness of personal identity presupposes, and therefore cannot constitute, personal identity; any more than knowledge, in any other case, can constitute truth, which it presupposes." Now, although it is clear enough what Butler would be at viz. that we must have some a priori knowledge "of what constitutes" Personal Identity, this will not do as a conclusive demonstration that we must. It is true that Locke himself is not "nice about terms", but he is generally more liable to be accused of prolixity than of

over-condensation, and consequently he does afford us the opportunity of finding the import of his terms by observation of his repeated usage. Butler, on the other hand and particularly here, does not sufficiently indicate the import of his terms. This tight juxtaposition of "knowledge", "truth", "consciousness", and "presuppose", together with the awe-inspiring formula "it is self-evident", smacks of a later and less honest style of philosophising than that which Butler usually affects. The sentence, as it stands, may, for all we know, be true according to some particular interpretation of its terms which we are not given. But it is quite obvious that Butler has Locke in mind throughout the Dissertation, although his name is not mentioned till the next page, and we are therefore interested in it only as it relates to Locke's account, and in what it can mean in terms of that account.

Let us, then, examine carefully what Butler's assertion involves. We note that he says: "... consciousness (of personal identity) ..... cannot constitute ..... any more than knowledge, in any other case, can constitute...." From which we gather that consciousness and knowledge are equivalent terms (which they certainly are not in Locke's account.) However, if we take it that the Bishop, like Locke, is merely

failing to be nice about terms, and assume that he meant to write "knowledge of" Personal Identity in the first place, we see that his assertion is that knowledge of our Personal Identity presupposes Personal Identity and therefore cannot constitute it. But what of knowledge? According to Locke -- and any other usage is not relevant here -- knowledge consists (with some qualifications that do not apply in this connection) in "nothing but the perception of the connection of and agreement, or disagreement and repugnancy of any of our ideas." Our knowledge of our Personal Identity, then, must consist in the agreement or disagreement of certain of our ideas. Now, leaving aside for the moment the analogy with knowledge and truth "in any other case" contained in the last clause of Butler's sentence, let us enquire further into this specific sort of knowledge. According to Butler's account, which we noted was at least superficially like Locke's, we found that we did, in fact, "ascertain the idea" of Personal Identity in a mode of consciousness which does, precisely, fulfil this requirement. We do, according to Butler, ascertain an agreement between certain of our ideas "upon comparing the consciousness of one's self, or one's own existence, in any two moments." So that Butler's assertion seems to be correct; for if "consciousness



of personal identity" consists in a sort of knowledge which involves the relating together of terms in an agreement, and the terms in this particular case are "consciousness of one's own existence now" and "consciousness of one's own existence then", and if consciousness of one's own existence involves the consciousness of Personal Identity, then it would seem that a consciousness which essentially involves the perception of such a relation does, indeed, presuppose the terms of the relation; and Butler's objection might appear to stand. However, before we abandon the position to him, it might be well to ask a little about the terms, and how we know, or are conscious of, them quite apart from the relation between them. The terms are, of course, in each case, "one's own existence". But one's own existence is not an object of which one can have a sensory presentation as now, and a memorial, visual image as then. Indeed, what knowledge do we have of our own existence? According to Locke -- and his account is the only relevant one here -- our knowledge of our own existence is an immediate intuition of the Self now. According then to Butler's schema, the terms of the relation whose perception constitutes Personal Identity, would have to be two immediate intuitions, one now, and the other then. But an intuition can only be now, it cannot be

then. One of the terms must therefore be an intuition as "then", but if the term is not an "intuition then", but "what was an intuition then", it must be an idea: for if we see the relationship, we must be aware of the terms, and if we are aware of the terms, we must intuit them or have them presented as ideas. Since one of the terms is qualified by "then", it cannot be an intuition, and therefore it must be an idea; for there is no third thing. From this we can see that, according to Butler's schema, the perception of relationship which constitutes our consciousness of Personal Identity is the perception of a relation between ideas, and these ideas are in this particular case, as we have seen before (and as it was open for Butler to see), ideas which are seen to agree in being (a) present ideas revealing among them thinking substance (see para.89) and carrying as their "I"-qualification, the unique mark of being the ideas which are the occasion of a certain individual Self's being intuited now (see para.153), and (b) recollected or memorial ideas containing among them the idea (an "opaque" idea -- see para. 123) of having been "thought by" a thinking substance, and carrying with them, as their "I"-qualification, the marks of having been part of the occasion, in the past, on which a unique individual Self was intuited then. The relation

perceived is, then, a relation between ideas qualified in a certain way. So that, clearly, what Butler is saying, or should be saying, is that consciousness of Personal Identity presupposes the occurrence of ideas in consciousness; and there is no point on which Locke and he could be in closer agreement. But, the circumstances being as described, the consciousness which is made to be that of Personal Identity precisely by the perception of the relation between such ideas, discovers Personal Identity, and does not presuppose it; and by discovering it, constitutes it. It is agreed that for there to be relation at all, there must be terms of some kind, and it is self-evident that all relationship presupposes terms (of some kind) to be related, and this, although not the point at issue, would appear to be Butler's point. But that the terms which constitute any actual individual relationship must be of one specific kind e.g. that the terms which are related in that particular relationship which by being perceived constitutes Personal Identity, must be of the specific kind which are direct, unmediated intuitions of "one's own existence" is neither self-evident nor, as a matter of fact, the case, nor indeed possible. According to Locke, that "I" exist now as Self, is self-evident, but that I exist now as a person who is the same person as was then, is

discursively established, even although (psychologically speaking) the discursive process is no more lengthy than the discerning of the relation between the "I"-qualifications. If it is asked what it is that so discovers the person, the answer is that it is the mind which thinks in me now and, constituting "my" present consciousness, carried upon it the marks of a present, but a-durational, intuition of a Self. This is in no way to say that the mind "creates itself I" by "thinking itself I", for that which mind so discovers in the relation of the terms which is the content of present consciousness, is "well-grounded" in all the ways we have seen (see para.131 above). Mind (or minds), as we have found (see para.154 above) is the medium and vehicle of all consciousness indifferently and is that from which personal consciousness is emergent on the intervention of Self. Consciousness, then -- even consciousness "of" Personal Identity in the only possible sense, which is that of "consciousness which discovers it in and by the connexion of ideas in it -- presupposes nothing other than consciousness. We may grant to Butler that consciousness "of mind or thinking substance" presupposes mind or thinking substance, since without its presence there is no consciousness. But we have had occasion to note on more than one occasion that consciousness of mind or thinking substance is quite a different thing



from consciousness of Self or Person. If consciousness "of" Personal Identity, in this only possible sense, did indeed presuppose Personal Identity, and if the terms of the relation were indeed direct intuitions of the Self -- which they are not -- then it would be impossible for there to be a mistake about Personal Identity. Intuition cannot be in error. And consequently the unfortunate descendant of Butler's patron would never have been able to be present at Waterloo when he was not -- and he was; nor is his case unique. From this we can see that, as was hinted before, it is Butler's failure to notice the importance of the anomalous cases and to include them in his rather too summary account of how <sup>we</sup> experience our own identity ("ascertain the idea") which leads him to make this quite unsound objection, and to neglect, or to examine only inadequately, the crucial question of what "consciousness of personal identity" actually consists in.

It might be illuminating to put this in another way viz.: since the consciousness of Personal Identity is a kind of knowledge consisting in the perception of an agreement between our ideas, this knowledge, being of a particular existence (one's own existence), cannot, according to Locke, possess certainty, but is only highly probable; for no proposition



that asserts a particular individual existence is certain, certainty being confined to "propositions wherein is expressed the agreement or disagreement of our abstract ideas, and their dependence on one another. Such propositions may be universal and certain (IV.xi.13)." And since the sort of knowledge we are considering "is only of particulars", no certainty can attach to it, since all other propositions are matters of opinion or faith based on varying degrees of probability, which Locke distinguishes from knowledge proper. Nor, (N.B.) does the special exception which Locke makes of knowledge of Self and its relation to real existence apply here; for that knowledge of the Self is not the knowledge which is a perception of the agreement of ideas, but is an intuition, non-ideal, sui generis, and now; and it is certain. So that we can see, by the way, that here is a further important distinction between the simultaneous presentations we have of ourselves as Self and Person viz. that the experience I have of "me" as Self expressed in the proposition "I exist now as Self" is a matter of certainty, while the experience I have of "me" as Person expressed in the proposition "I am now the same Person as I was then" is very highly probable. Locke has, in any case, implied in ix. of IV. that absolute certainty of the existence of the Self is confined to the present intuition.

But to revert, now, to Butler; we might credit him here with toying with the notion, somewhat elliptically, that there is, contrary to Locke's general view, one sort of synthetic judgement about particular existence which is apodeictically certain viz. the judgement that the "now" ideas and the "then" ideas which are the terms of the relationship which is the content of the consciousness being discussed, are identical -- and this is what would be involved in his contention that Personal Identity is presupposed in the consciousness that discovers it. We might then say that Butler is attempting, however obscurely, to assert this different doctrine, and so to correct Locke's account. But on the other hand it is quite clear that Locke himself was aware that there are synthetic judgements which, as certain and "instructive", are exceptions to his general view, and that he draws our attention less cumbrously to what Kant was later to draw our attention to in his reflections on the "synthetic a priori". (See IV.viii.8 which makes this clear beyond any doubt.) But the point is that the proposition that expresses this particular relationship we are considering is not one of those. And it is not so because the relationship is not the necessary consequence of the ideas themselves i.e. the relation of identity between the "then"

ideas and the "now" ideas does not necessarily follow from the nature of these ideas, as it does, to use one of Locke's examples, in the case of the necessary relations of "being larger than" and "being smaller than" which obtain between the external angle of a triangle and either of the opposite internal angles, which relationships are the necessary consequence of the ideas that make up a triangle, but are not a mere explication of the ideas that make it up quâ triangle, named as such. That, in the case we have to consider, the relationship is anything but the necessary consequence of the ideas themselves, can be seen from the fact that we can be in error in relating sets of ideas together in this sort of consciousness (see para.134 above) as, once again, in the case of George IV. But quite apart from this consideration, if we examine Butler's assertion further, we see that he has himself betrayed any such defence of his objection by remarking, in the concluding clause, that the perception of this particular relation which constitutes the kind of knowledge we are considering, is the same as "any other case" of knowledge i.e. by denying precisely, that this particular perception of relation is of a special kind. And this, I think we may take it, disposes of the most formidable-looking of Butler's objections.

It is perhaps to be observed again that, since he is directing his shafts against Locke, Butler is either obliged to use terms in the same way as Locke, or to indicate that he is not doing so, and point out where Locke's usage is wrong. Otherwise, if he tacitly adopts a different usage, whatever the Dissertation may be, it is no criticism either of Locke's account or of its implications. That to place such an obligation upon Butler involves no anachronism can be seen from the patient length at which Locke explicates his own terms in the correspondence with Stillingfleet, and even tries to explicate that Bishop's when he has to quote him.

161. (iii) The points which I include in this section are those which Butler makes in telling us what that is of which we have the sort of a priori knowledge he requires, and which itself constitutes Personal Identity. And it is, we find, nothing more novel or alarming than one continuing spiritual substance. He chooses to express this view in a paragraph which is nothing other than a denial that there is any ground whatsoever of identity, other than sameness of substance. In other words he quite explicitly rejects all Locke has to say about "organic" identity and thereby makes clear that he is, unlike Locke, completely confined by the

received metaphysical concepts of his day. That his rejection of organic identity is explicit becomes clear from his opening sentence (op.cit. p.389): " ... what makes vegetables the same in the common acceptation of the word, does not appear to have any relation to this (inquiry) of personal identity....." And the example he uses in amplification of this is of the same sort as that used by Locke in xxvii. of II. viz. of the same tree which has stood in the same spot for half a century, and which is spoken of as the same tree although all its parts have altered many times. But in this case, according to Butler, no identity is to be found. It is only "in a loose and popular sense..... the life and the organisation and the plant are justly said to be the same, notwithstanding the perpetual change of the parts." But, he goes on to say, in a "strict and philosophical manner of speech ..... the identity of these (anything or being) ..... cannot subsist with diversity of substance." Now, this is not argument, but assertion. It might be said that neither is Locke's account argument, but description. And although this is true, the point is to be made that Locke's description which asserts that the tree I saw as a child and recognise again as a grown man has an identity, is a better description than Butler's, which asserts



that it hasn't. What does Butler's assertion involve? Surely that a continuant which I meet in the ordinary way of experience and which I recognise and refer to as a vegetable continuant, is, after all, no continuant at all. It is, on the contrary, a succession of different colligations of material substances, the constituents of which (colligations) are in continual change, so that the colligations themselves follow each other with such rapidity and are different one from the other by, perhaps, such infinitesimal accretions, subtractions or substitutions that I do not observe their succession. The fact that the colligations which occur in the month of May have visual qualities which are, or which provide to me, the sensation "green", and in October have qualities which are or provide the sensation "brown", and that they continue to do so each returning May and October, is either contingent or it is the consequence of the Divine will which makes the substances behave like that. The fact that the collected substances are more numerous at the end of successive lustres in that the trunk of the vegetable is fatter, is presumably to be explained likewise. This might, granting a proper omnipotence to God, be the case, if it were not for the fact that it leaves out of account one constituent of the organism which cannot be talked away from our experience of it.

by "the strictest and most philosophical manner of speech" viz. its ~~liveliness~~ or vitality -- whose discriminable presence us an indefeasible fact of experience. The growth of a fir tree is patently not the same thing as the growth of a stalgmite, though they may resemble each other in shape and both be "material substances"; nor is the withering of snowdrops at all the equivalent of the melting of snowdrifts. And if a strict and philosophical manner of speech asserts that they are the same thing, then it is an inadequate manner of speech -- which Locke signally improved on. Further to this, it is very noticeable that Butler confines himself to the garden and, I think rather deliberately, avoids the paddock and the kennels. The identity of animals is not mentioned -- here, though it is very much in point. It is clear that the identity of "brutes" perplexed Butler a great deal, for although there is complete and perhaps significant silence about them here, the matter is raised in the text of the "analogy" itself in a passage where he has to hedge most uncomfortably -- a passage which we shall examine more closely in a little. But meanwhile we should note that if Butler's strict and philosophical view as expressed here is the correct one, then, as Locke pointed out with perhaps a little malice both in xxvii of II. and to Stillingfleet, he, or anyone

holding such a view, will have to shew why the identity of brutes cannot be maintained among their constantly changing constituent substances, or he may be committed to locating the identity, like that of men themselves, in spiritual substances. And that, as we noted, settled the Cartesians -- as far as the necessary immutability of substance, either material or spiritual, was concerned in its relation to identity. But in fairness to Butler we must observe that it by no means disposes of him. If we now turn to the passage of the "Analogy" where this matter is raised, at para.21 of Chapter I. (op.cit. pp.37-38) we find that in countering an objection to his contention that, since the percipience and agency of living beings can survive the loss or damage of many of the material instruments and organs of that percipience and agency, there is a presumption that they can survive the dissolution of the body entire, an objection which takes the form of saying that if the presumption holds in the case of men, it must likewise hold in the case of beasts, Butler says: "Suppose the invidious thing designed in such a manner of expression" -- i.e. that animals having spirit and therefore being immortal, may be capable of everlasting happiness -- "were really implied ..... in the natural immortality of brutes .... even this would be no difficulty..... The

natural immortality of brutes does not in the least imply that they are endued with any latent capacities of a rational or moral nature." In other words, though parrots, according to Butler, may go to Heaven, that does not mean that they will talk as sagely as Prince Maurice's or reflect on the error of their former ways. And this means, as Gladstone remarks in one of his few relevant notes, that Butler disclaims any doctrine of a rational or moral nature for animals, but stops short of disclaiming the argument for their immortality, as implied in a spirit distinct from body. He notes too that Butler's friend Clarke was prepared to write: "Brutes for all we know may become rational agents, as infants do. If not, the system of the universe may require the future existence of brutes, as it requires the present." And that Butler was prepared to put himself in Clarke's tutelage in matters of metaphysics, if not of morals, I conclude from the correspondence between them e.g. that of 1713-14 on "Self-Existent Substance."

It appears, then, that Butler's rejection of Locke's account of Organic Identity and replacement of it by an account in terms of sameness of substance alone as ground of any identity, including that of persons, involves him in either of the alternatives: (i) that those apparent continuants



which we recognise and refer to (if only in a "loose and popular" way) as animal organisms are, in fact, like fir trees and snowdrops, successive but utterly distinct and diverse colligations of material substances following each other so rapidly that the succession is imperceptible (since even if the difference between one colligation and another is of only one "atom" or "corpuscle" then, on Butler's principle, they are distinct colligations and not the same, and there can scarcely be a moment in which each one of them does not alter by a scruple), and the order of their succession is by chance or direct interventions such that, if the only specious continuant is an arctic hare, the properties of its constituent substances change, e.g. from white to dun, with an odd regularity, and the quantities of them change concomitantly (and again rather oddly) with the presence or absence of edible vegetation -- which itself, of course, is constituted by merely other (such) succession: or, (ii) that the same continuant is inhabited by the same sort of spiritual or intellectual substance as inhabits persons, and thereby has its identity, so that, on Butler's view, it would take its chance, equally with men, of survival, bliss, or damnation.

Now, from his readiness to admit that it is at least possible that animals may have "spirit", we can say for Butler



that he was less subject to conceptual rigidities than those of his contemporaries who accepted the unpalatable, and indeed preposterous, Cartesian account of animals, but, also, that he is still a long way from emulating Locke's elasticity of mind or accuracy of observation. Although the notion of animals having souls and, perhaps, rational and moral faculties may be less repugnant to us than it was to Dugald Stewart (who was scandalised by Locke's repetition of the story about the Prince's parrot, and who can obviously never have loved a cat), as an account of the identity of animals, it is less plausible than Locke's and it is certainly not susceptible of proof -- at least until we have the chance of verifying Dr. Clarke's second hypothesis empirically. As an account of what we experience, it is inferior to Locke's, and since Butler can offer nothing better than a dogmatic assertion in support of his contention that, in despite of all experience, identity is confined to sameness of substance, we are justified, I think, in refusing the objection that Personal Identity cannot be constituted by consciousness, because it must be constituted by the same substance. Identity can be constituted otherwise.

162. (iv) In this fourth section we must consider what

is not so much an objection to Locke's account as a plain misrepresentation of what he says (op.cit. p.391). Butler writes, obviously with the text of the "Essay" open before him: "The thing here considered, and demonstratively, as I think, determined, is proposed by Mr. Locke in these words 'Whether it' i.e. the same self of person 'be the same identical substance?' And he has suggested what is a much better answer to the question, than that which he gives it in form. For he defines person 'a thinking intelligent being' etc. and personal identity, 'the sameness of a rational being'. The question then is, whether the same rational being is the same substance: which needs no answer, because Being and Substance, in this place, stand for the same idea." Now the answer to this is simply the direct negative that neither here nor anywhere else does Locke make Being, as applied to something thinking and intelligent, the equivalent of Substance, or of Substance alone -- as must be apparent to anyone who reads him with even moderate attention. He does not even make them equivalent in his application of "being" to animals. Repeatedly and at length -- in all the ways we have already noted, particularly in Section VI of this study, which it would be as tedious as unnecessary to repeat over again -- Locke makes the point, which Butler either ignored

or was genuinely incapable of comprehending, that the spiritual substance that thinks in any moment of consciousness, is not itself, or does not itself alone constitute, the being who is conscious, any more than the material substance that exists in any moment of an organism's continuance constitutes the being of the organism, which is to be located rather in the organic function of, or carried out by, the substance which is (in both cases) merely the medium or instrumental concomitant of that to which "being" refers. If the identical material substances which, when organised, are in this way the "medium" of an organic Being, were, while remaining the same material substances, not so organised, then there would be no Being; and likewise the consciousness which is the result of the thinking carried out by an intellectual substance, or various intellectual substances, does not make up the consciousness of a "thinking Being" unless the constituent ideas are something more than merely the ideas possessed by this or that substance.

163. (v) Butler continues his contention that the same Self or Person is the same Substance in a passage in which his expression seems to me very confused indeed (op.cit.pp.391-2). He starts by observing, quite correctly, that the ground of

Locke's doubt about the continued presence of the same thinking substance, is the fact that consciousness is not continuous, it is not "the same individual action." But we must note that Butler is quite wrong when he goes on to attribute to Locke the opinion that "the consciousness of our own existence in youth and in old age, or in any two joint successive moments, is not the 'same individual action'." That our consciousness in youth and in old age is not, and cannot be, the same individual action, is most certainly Locke's view. For if it were, then it would mean that from youth to old age a man had been continually conscious without intermission of sleep or insensibility of any kind, or even of a vacant mood. But that our consciousness is not the same individual action in "any two joint successive moments" is most certainly not Locke's view. Provided that a succession of moments of consciousness is unbroken, then on Locke's view it is the "action" of the same thinking substance which is the vehicle or medium of the ideas which constitute that consciousness throughout its unbroken duration. But if the continuity is completely broken, as by sleep or anaesthesia, then when the "same consciousness" is revived, there is no way of knowing that the vehicle or medium is the same -- and by "same" consciousness is meant only a consciousness



which contains at the time of revival and thereafter, some at least of the contents of the former conscious series as revived ideas. If, again, the content of the consciousness is so completely changed that between time T-1 and time T-n of some series, there occur two moments of consciousness, say, at time T-5 and time T-9, neither of which contains any idea in common with the other, then, without intermission of complete insensibility, there is such effectual amnesia that there can be no guarantee of the presence of the same thinking substance. But that this could occur in every two joint successive moments of consciousness, Locke never suggests, and it is patently impossible; for if it were so then each moment of consciousness would be isolated and we would have no experience of duration or continuants, and Locke most assuredly never proposes anything so remote from our ordinary experience. This is again a plain mis-statement on Butler's part.

He goes on, as far as I can make anything of his argument, to suggest that there is something contradictory in saying (a) that consciousness which is interrupted is not the same consciousness (which is how he interprets Locke's "not the same individual action"), and (b) that such successive consciousnesses may have the same object. He puts it thus:



"And thus though the successive consciousnesses, which we have of our own existence, are not the same, yet are they consciousnesses of one and the same thing or object; of the same person, self, or living agent." But what he fails, once again, to do, is to enquire sufficiently into what is involved in knowing at time T-2 the same object as was known at time T-1. If what I was conscious of at time T-1 was the Bishop of Durham's mitre when I watched him being enthroned, and at time T-2 the same mitre when I remembered him being enthroned, then at time T-1 the constituent ideas of the mitre were presentationally qualified, and at time T-2 they were memorially qualified. At time T-2 I am not conscious of the mitre (the same mitre) in the same way as I was conscious of it at time T-1. On the first occasion it revealed among and through its ideas the fact that it was underlain by material substance, while on the second occasion it is presented as having been underlain by material substance when it was formerly presented. What Butler is suggesting is that on each occasion I have consciousness of the "real presence" of the mitre -- whereas, as matter of fact, on the second occasion I do not. When this is applied to the matter of remembering "one's own existence" and not a Bishop's mitre, it becomes very plain that this is nothing more than

another version, even more obscurely expressed, of the sort of argument we dealt with under heading (ii) above. For what, on Butler's view, would be required, is, once again, that on an occasion of remembering my own existence, I should have presented to me "myself then" -- i.e. my real presence then -- and not what I do have presented, "myself AS I was then." There is, then, nothing unintelligible in Locke's account, and still no excuse for equating the existence of myself with the existence of a single spiritual substance, which is the "same object" of successive states of consciousness.

164. (vi) Butler's next section begins with a sentence that is perhaps better passed over in silence viz.: "Mr. Locke's observations on this subject appear hasty." (!) The objection here is avowedly not to Locke's own views -- Butler's customary caution fortunately interposes at this point in the Dissertation -- but to arguments which purport to be developments of them. "When traced and examined to the bottom", they amount, we are told, to this: "That personality is not a permanent but a transient thing: that it lives and dies, begins and ends continually: that no one can any more remain one and the same person two moments together, than two

successive moments can be one and the same moment: that our substance is indeed continually changing; but whether this be so or not, is, it seems, nothing to the purpose; since it is not substance, but consciousness alone, which constitutes personality; which consciousness, being successive, cannot be the same in any two moments, not consequently the personality constituted by it."

It is as well that Butler frees Locke of any personal responsibility for this, for if it purported to be an account of his views, it would be hard to know where or how to start to untangle such a wonderfully close web of misapprehensions. We may note that there is one clause alone of the passage which bears any relation to the "Essay" viz.: "it is not substance, but consciousness alone, which constitutes personality.", and even this is dubious; for according to Locke it is in consciousness alone that we have any experience of ourselves as persons, and it is continued consciousness that is the ground of our personal identity, but whether he would assent, in view of what he said in Book IV., to personality (which is not in any case a term he is given to using) being constituted wholly by consciousness of our personal identity, is more questionable -- it would depend on what "personality" referred to, since despite the confinement of our knowledge of

ourselves as persons to continued consciousness, there is always to be remembered the awareness of the real existence of our Selves. Every other clause in the paragraph can, without further exception, be directly negatived from the text of the "Essay". If these were indeed what purported to be the implications of Locke's view, then they were very wrongly drawn. Had Butler himself been clearer as to what Locke's view is, he might have been able to point this out.

(vii) This section (op.cit. para.8. p.394) consists of an argumentum ad hominem directed against the sort of view quoted above, and therefore not against Locke. We need only note that Butler thinks, quite erroneously, that it applies to any view of the Self which does not make it an immutable substance. The point of the argument is that since we act in terms of a belief in a real continued self (which Locke never tries to contravert) in this life, we should act in terms of it in regard to the next ~~i.e.~~ we should be moral, and not make an affected belief in the utter instability of the Self (which Locke does not hold) an excuse for licence and irresponsibility. Locke, I think, would concur.

(viii) The contention we have to consider in this section is of more interest and relevance (op.cit. para.9. p.394). Butler begins by remarking: "It is not an idea, an abstract

notion, or a quality, but a being only, which is capable of life and action, of happiness and misery." And the question immediately arises as to what sort of "being" is meant here, for although "in a loose and popular sense" this statement might be acceptable, a stricter and more philosophical enquiry would require something less ambiguous. Is this "being" a mind, and if it is a mind, is that to be considered the equivalent of spiritual substance? or, again, is it a "man" in the sense of an embodied spirit? But although such questions might be legitimately raised, I think it is clear enough that by Being, Butler means a particular individual substance. This interpretation is borne out by his earlier misrepresentation of Locke's usage of Being, and by his prior assertion here that it is neither an abstract notion nor a quality. Further to this, we can observe that from the long argument in the text of the "Analogy" itself (op.cit. pp.25-44), that embodiment is, for Butler, not at all necessary to a living Being. In his next sentence, too, he says: "Now all beings confessedly continue the same, during the whole time of their existence" -- and this smacks very much of substance. This Being (= Substance) is spoken of here in terms that suggest that it is a Self or Person; and indeed we have already found more than once that this is Butler's view.



But if this view is correct, surely the last sentence we quoted raises some odd questions in relation to the identity of an agent. If a Being (= Substance) has remained the same for twenty years, as according to Butler it must, and, during that time, has, as a human Being, concomitantly with remaining the same as substance, been a model of moral virtue, and then in the twenty-first year it takes to drink and makes a rake's progress through the other six deadly sins, does it remain the same Being during the next twenty years of vice as it did through the twenty years of its virtue? It must: for "all beings confessedly continue the same, during the whole time of their existence." What, then, has changed? It must be the properties of the substance that have changed, for if they had not, then we would not be able to tell the difference between a vicious man and a virtuous one; and this is a distinction on which we are all very certain that we can judge with certainty. So that, although a property cannot be transferred from one substance to another (as Butler has already told us, with an eye to Locke), it appears that the same substance may have, successively, different properties. So that the properties which constituted the virtue of the virtuous Being are, merely, different from those which constituted the vice of the vicious Being, but the Being is the

same Being. And this explanation might seem good enough, until we ask the question: "To whom or what is the moral responsibility for the Being's actions to be imputed?" To the Substance? or to the properties? It cannot well be to the Being which is the same individual substance, because that would be to impute the blame for the latter debauchery to the very same and unchanged substance ~~as~~ was formerly a model of virtue, and if it is said that it is the "same" substance but that it "has changed", then it must be asked in what way a substance can change other than by having different properties, and if it is only the properties that have changed (which is admitted), does not the substance remain unchanged? And could we, in that case, attribute blame for present debauchery to a Being who is in no way different from the Being we approved as virtuous? Likewise if, after twenty years of depravity, the Being reforms (the same Being) and spends its remaining twenty years in all humility and repentance, to whom or what are we to impute the moral approbation for this? To the same and unchanged Substance which a few years ago was a scandal to all morality? If it is said that these questions are both sophistical and metaphysically naïf because, ~~as~~ might be said, substance apart from properties is inane, and properties are nothing apart

from their substance, then the answer is that, plainly, either the substance does not remain the same when its properties successively alter and therefore it is not the same "during the whole time of its existence", or it does remain the same and is therefore not affected by its properties which are, or apparently may be, different and incompatible in their succession. If it is said that it is not the "properties" which a Substance has, as a Being, that make it morally good or evil, but some other thing e.g. "will" or "disposition" or something not a "property", then in that case the answer is that, after all, the Being is not a Substance, since Substance is that which has properties, but is some other thing which does not have properties but which has e.g. "will" or "disposition" which, it might be said, are not properties. If the first alternative is right, then the Being which Butler regards as Self or Person is not the same Being, but a succession of them (i.e. a succession of substances), and this is not a conclusion which would recommend itself to him, and is one which he reprobates in Locke who, in fact, never positively asserted it. (So far from asserting that the Self is underlain, in fact, by a succession of substances, Locke even remarks that it is "very probable" that it is underlain by one substance: his point is that this is not known, and is

so far irrelevant.) If the second alternative is right, then whatever may have moral responsibility imputed to it, it is not Butler's sort of Being -- unless the Being's agency is uniform in kind i.e. that there is no succession of properties which are incompatible as those constituting virtue and vice are incompatible. And this might be a way out of the difficulty; for if every Being has from the time that it begins to exist, one all-qualifying, over-riding property either of "being depraved" or of "being ordained to grace", then obviously the problem does not arise; for in the former case its virtue could only be specious, and in the latter its vice either unreal or licensed. But for anyone holding Butler's view to take that way out, would mean that he would have to go, for his moral theology, not to Canterbury (or Rome for that matter), but to the ruder climates of Geneva or Edinburgh.

If, on the other hand, responsibility is simply not to be attributed to the Being which is a Substance, at all, because it, in itself, is affected neither one way nor the other by what it underlies, are we then to attribute moral responsibility to a bundle of "loose" properties? Even if we wished to, we could not -- if properties are nothing apart from Substance.

If anyone holding Butler's "substantial" view of the Self, were to fall back on the eschatological argument and say: the Substance or Being is and remains the same, and the properties are different and often incompatible, but all is still well, because at the final judgement -- and that is all that matters -- the Substance which is the Being will be resurrected with all the properties it ever had, at once together; so that the same substance will then come to Judgement underlying all and every one of them simultaneously, however incompatible, remote, or even mutually exclusive and contradictory they may be. And although, granted omnipotence, it may be possible that, after the Last Day, the same substance may have or underlie mutually exclusive and contradictory qualifications, this might give a sober metaphysician pause to think, and it appears to me that such a view would commit Butler to the same sort of strange eschatology in which his brother of Worcester involved himself, and which Locke followed through so remorselessly in the second Letter. And, we may note, Stillingfleet's error arose from a very similar misapprehension about the "same Self".

If anyone holding Butler's view tries to avoid Stillingfleet's sort of absurdity by saying that, at Judgement, the same substance will not actually possess or underlie



simultaneously, incompatible qualifications, but that all properties and qualifications etc. will be furnished to it "from the record" i.e. will be revived in consciousness or memory, then this is to sell the pass to Locke utterly, for in that case moral identity, at least, is grounded in nothing but consciousness.

The point of this particular disputation is to demonstrate that Butler is in his zeal for substantial identity, betrayed into a neglect of what Locke realised was much more important i.e. moral identity. It is curious to note that Locke kept much more steadily before him, and, in the event, served much better what he called "the great ends of Morality and Religion" than did his ordained and consecrated critics. That, according to Locke's account -- whatever may have been the vagaries of his self-appointed followers -- there is a moral agent to whom responsibility is imputed, but that this is not a substance, or at least that it is not such that it can helpfully be included in that concept with its notorious rigidities and ambiguities, is the point of importance which remains to be considered in the concluding section.

Meanwhile, to continue with the remainder of Butler's contention in this paragraph: -- having established to his satisfaction that it is only a Being (in his sense) "which

is capable of life and action", Butler goes on: "All these successive actions, enjoyments, and sufferings, are actions, enjoyments, and sufferings of the same living being. And they are so, prior to all consideration of its remembering or forgetting: since remembering or forgetting make no alteration in the truth of past matter of fact." Or, in other words, continuity of consciousness has nothing whatever to do with Personal Identity. It is, of course, the appeal to "matter of fact" that makes us pause here, for, on Locke's view, such an appeal is an appeal to authority -- the only authority. But what, in the situation described, could "past matter of fact" mean? All the evidence about past matter of fact which we can have is, in the nature of things, from our memory and from the testimony of others relying upon their memories. Admittedly, memory is, in general, veridical: but, as matter of fact, memorial testimony can not only be different but also flatly contradictory on what purports to be past "matter of fact". If we suppose what in reality we can never know, viz. that a man commits an act of which he loses all memory, then, according to Butler, whether or not it is the case that he can never remember it, the fact remains that he did it. But how could we know that? Presumably we would say it was past matter of fact that he did the act, if

all the people who "remember" being there, also agree in "remembering that" he did it. But if his memory can so betray him that he cannot remember that he did do it, why may we not suppose that their memories are liable to be fallible in "remembering that" he did do it? (One has only to reflect on the melancholy spectacle of the righteous of a community raking through the biography of a scapegoat, to be aware of the frailty of even the most agreed consensuses of memory.) We presume that a majority is not deceived (except in the parenthetic case) because memory is, in general, veridical? Possibly so; but if there were only one other or only a few other witnesses, the probability of error may be equal on either side, or nearly so. If there are a great many witnesses then we do tend to accept the "fact", but we most assuredly are not entitled to claim certainty in doing so. For all practical purposes, agreement of memorial testimony establishes "facts" about actions -- as in a law court. But if this is all Butler means by "past matter of fact" then the contribution he is making to the discussion is no more helpful or acute than Leibniz's similar one. So that, as it turns out, his appeal to matter of fact consists in no more than his raising, and then begging, all the questions about the distinction of Man, Self, Person, and Body which

issue in the forensic paradoxes we examined in para.148 above. The identity of a living Being is, contrary to Butler's view, much dependant on remembering or forgetting i.e. on continued consciousness, both in himself and in others, since past matter of fact is, like the Being's identity, confined to it.

165. (ix) In this section (op.cit. para.10. p.395) Butler shews, as he has done before, that he is capable of attacking the problem from the right side, and of following Locke's account so far, but that he always diverges when Locke's analysis goes deeper precisely by adhering to what we do experience, without regard to accepted dogma. And every time Butler stumbles, it is over the same thing -- the Self as Substance, which haunts his criticism as relentlessly and inimically as "Simplicity" haunted T.H. Green's. He starts with a good paraphrase of Locke: "Every person is conscious that he is now the same person or self as he was as far back as his remembrance reaches: since when any one reflects on a past action of his own, he is just as certain of the person who did that action, namely, himself, the person who now reflects upon it, as he is certain that the action was at all done." But I suspect that he was unaware of the importance of the proportional relation as to certainty implied in the

grammar of the latter part of his sentence. We are, indeed, only just as certain that we are the same person now as then, as we are certain that we did the action. And this, with an emphasis he fails to give it, might contain the necessary qualification that although memory is generally reliable, there seems reason to believe, if only from conflict of testimony, that sometimes it is not -- with important consequences as to identity. He goes on to over-emphasise the certainly we have about our past selves from present experience by writing: "Nay, very often a person's assurance of an action having been done, of which he is absolutely assured, arises wholly from the consciousness that he himself did it." And although this may be true and may in the majority of cases be an instance of veridical memory, as an account of how we know our own identity, whatever may in fact constitute it, it is incomplete without the additional comment which, for us, consists in conjuring up, yet once again, the instructive and indefatigable shade of King George. It is his blindness to the fact that he is over-emphasising in a manner that Locke avoids, and is ignoring important evidence, that reinforces Butler in his mistaken belief about Self and Substance. He seems to have some sort of belief that since, when we remember our past Self, we are remembering a substance, such memory can



never be fallacious. Had he thought a little about the odd cases of memory (as Locke did), his faith in the substantial Self might have been shaken. But, as it is, having shewn that he has some insight into the situation, he goes on in the very next sentence to define the limitations of his thinking in the most precise manner, writing: "And this he, person or self, must either be a substance, or the property of some substance. If he, if person, be a substance; then consciousness that he is the same person is consciousness that he is the same substance. If the person, or he, be the property of a substance, still consciousness that he is the same property is as certain a proof that his substance remains the same, as consciousness that he remains the same substance would be.... " Upon this, I think, there is nothing more that can usefully be said.

(x) In the concluding section Butler, almost perversely, shews again that on certain aspects of the problem, he can be acute. He provides here, in fact, an excellent answer, based on the general reliability of memory, to the sort of objection we noted in para.116 above viz. whether, as Butler puts it, "though we are thus certain we are the same agents ... now, which we were as far back as our remembrance reaches; yet ..... (may we) not possibly be deceived in it?" He

points out that if memory is not to be trusted at all in respect of the remembering of our own past, then neither is it to be trusted in any instance of deduction or reasoning which invariably involves "the truth of perception by memory". And since arguments against the veracity of memory involve reasonings which necessarily include the activity of memory, it is ridiculous to try to prove its total unreliability by using it and presupposing its truth in the purported demonstration.

But, again, having made an excellent point, he spoils the effect of it by making it clear in the paragraph that he regards "living beings, agents, or substances" as equivalent.

166. From this, it appears to me, all Butler's criticisms of Locke, explicit and implied, fail without exception. Their failure is to be traced both to his inadequate understanding of what is involved in remembering, and to the rigidity of his adherence to the dogma that Self is Substance, for which he cannot produce a reasoned defence. If he had seen more clearly what memory involves, he might also have seen that his position in regard to substance is untenable; on the other hand the strength of his conviction may have inhibited in him the attempt to carry through a candid

examination of memory of a kind more worthy of his capacities. Whether he did not read the "Essay" with sufficient care, or whether he was simply incapable of seeing Locke's point about the Self, it is impossible to tell. But sometimes it does seem that he has simply not attended to what Locke was saying. On the other hand, it may not be easy for us to realise, by an exercise of sympathetic imagination, how original Locke's account may have seemed in just those places where Butler seems unable to follow it -- unable to follow in the sense of incapable of understanding it; likewise, it may be impossible for us to "think ourselves into" the state of mind that was apparently Butler's in regard to spiritual substance. The conceptual habits we inherit, have had more than two centuries to become adapted to the seismic disturbance which Locke occasioned in the realm of that substance. But it is at least clear that Butler is open to the charge of being hampered by inadequate metaphysical concepts which he never criticised, which was Whitehead's much less justified criticism of Locke.

If this scrutiny of the Dissertation leaves us with a diminished admiration for Butler's penetration, it is to be remembered that the point of view from which he tried to criticise Locke has, as a description of experience, much more

to be said for it than there is to be said for those purporting "developments" of Locke's position, carried out on the lunatic fringe of "empiricist" philosophy, which Butler summarises in his sixth paragraph, and, to my mind, at least as much to be said for it as those other more reputable, and much more skilful, developments of it which issued in Berkeley's implausible idealism (which makes of spirit the only substance), or the "atomistic" phenomenology of David Hume which, as a description of what we do experience, is, in comparison with the Aristotelian range and detail of Locke's account, a narrow and artificial production which sadly belies the contemporary and singularly inappropriate designation of it as "naturalistic". Even Butler, it seems to me, does more justice to "experience" in the points he touches on, than does Hume who, however heterodox the suggestion, seems to be confined at least as much as him to the "atomistic" formalities of an archaic metaphysics which is only speciously rejected.

167. If it is said that neither Butler nor anyone else is to be blamed for not following Locke's account because, in this respect, as in every other, his exposition is quite unsystematic, the answer is that if his "being unsystematic"



means that he refrains from forcing the result of his observations and reflections into an ill-fitting straight-jacket to make it presentable to received logical doctrine, in the manner of Immanuel Kant, or, put otherwise, that he does not mar the fidelity of his transcription of experience by imposing on it from without an unnaturally symmetrical architectonic, again in the manner of Kant, or by oversimplifying its complexity by misdirecting attention to sense experience solely, because of its fortuitous vividness and constant accessibility, after the manner of Hume, then I think that not only is it to be agreed that Locke is unsystematic, but also that this is to be marked to his credit, even if it does require a greater effort from the reader.

This is not in any way to impugn the value of Kant's analysis of experience as such, and in despite of the formalistic violence done it by its author, or to denigrate Hume's expository brilliance (although it is perhaps to be remarked that it is for the provision of a criterion of technical accomplishment, rather than for any illumination of our ordinary experience, that we must be grateful to Hume), it is merely to point out that their virtues, such as being systematic in the one case and lucid in the other, which are also their limitations, are not sticks which can be used for



beating Locke with, simply because his virtues happen to be quite other ones, and because he is perhaps less limited.

I say less limited because, using nothing but the language of ordinary experience and thereby avoiding both the perils of Kant's "private mint of words" and the remoteness from common sense which is the consequence of that thinker's excessive philosophical professionalism, Locke anticipates him quite clearly in the most important points e.g. in drawing our attention to the existence in experience of what is expressed in ampliative but certainly true propositions, in giving an account of that necessary concomitant of any perception of an existing thing, which consists in the constitutive compresence of the "ideas of" Duration, Extension, and Substance in any idea or representation of a real existing thing (as I have shewn in Section III), an account which has the advantage of Kant's in not banishing the real existent so far into the Beyond, and in the account of the Self, particularly in the crucially important demonstration that the identification of the Soul with Substance is a transcendental illusion, and that the intransferability of consciousness from a single substance is dogma only, and untenable. He is, too, less limited than Hume in that, avoiding Hume's distortion by simplification, by refusing to be put off by the incompatibility

of his own various accounts with each other or with the requirements of "logic" (language?) when what we experience is at variance with what is logically required, he provided, in advance, a prophylactic against the nescience which is consequent on Hume's account provided that, and only provided that, its original "atomistic" analysis is accepted, by making clear that in comparison with his own description, such a description as Hume's involving such an analysis, is a poor and inaccurate account of our whole experience.

IX.

CONCLUSION: THE SELF AND THE PERSON.

168. In this concluding section we are to examine further the distinction between Self and Person, and what it is in experience that, as I maintain, we do recognise by this, and what, if we are to reduce certain confusions and difficulties of long standing, we ought to speak of in terms of it. It is a distinction upon which, I have admitted, Locke did not himself work sufficiently, in the sense -- only -- that he did not in any one place make an explicit enough statement of it, although, as appears to me, his whole account of this province of our experience is in fact in terms of such a distinction. And it is the drawing of our attention to this distinction, which is at least implicit in all of his account, that to my mind is one of the respects in which the "plain historical account" is most illuminating.

169. We have found, so far, that the difference between them manifests itself in the different ways in which we know ourselves as Selves, and know (or are conscious of) ourselves as Persons.

What is known when I know myself as Person is constituted by the discerning of a relation between ideas. This relation consists in the agreement of certain qualifications which these ideas -- as presentationally and re-presentationally modified -- possess; and the discerning of this agreement is a function of the mind which "thinks in me now". The content of this kind of consciousness is too, as we have seen, a kind of knowledge discursively established, and it is highly probable, but not apodeictically certain. We can, in other words, be mistaken in the discernment of the agreement -- or so it seems -- and can as a result, in anomalous cases, discern "ourselves to be" different Persons at different times. The ideas which can thus be related in such consciousness of being a Person, are all those which can be presented to "present" consciousness, and all those which can be re-presented to present consciousness as revived ideas, subject to the conditions, and in the various possible series, which we noted before (see paras 130-131 above).

This sort of consciousness necessarily involves duration. It is an awareness of something, a Person, as a continuant i.e. as something identical with itself in duration and with its own successive appearances, and the act of apprehending that this is so, is itself durational -- since it is discursive



and involves the relating of ideas whose identity with themselves as psychic events and identity with each other as presented and re-presented ideas "of the same thing", involves duration "beyond the moment or specious present."

On the other hand, when I know myself as Self, I have a direct intuition. What I then know is neither idea nor relation of ideas. Consequently, what the content of this sort of consciousness may be, is something which, although immediately and clearly known, it may be hard, or even impossible, to describe at all. And the reason for this difficulty is not far to seek. We have at least been able to say that what we know in such a case is neither idea nor relation of ideas, and since words are names for ideas, or for the relation between ideas, there are, simply no words in which this can be described -- at least directly. Likewise, what is known in this sort of consciousness is not durational, nor, consequently, is the consciousness itself in which we know it, i.e. the intuition, durational. And this is, clearly enough, for something of the same reason as makes the content of the experience ineffable viz. that, once again, what we know in and by this intuition is not idea or relation of ideas; and that since, in the description of experience we are accepting, duration is constituted by the succession of ideas



(see para.51 above), then where there are no ideas, there is no duration. Therefore, when I know myself as Self, I know my Self "now", and "now" only. Duration is not a climate in which the Self can live. When the Self which is known "now" becomes projected, as it were, into the mode of duration, then it ceases to be the Self and becomes part of the Person. And this is so because ~~an~~ intuition cannot be remembered. The object of an act of remembering is a memorially qualified idea (see paras 152 and 154 above). When consciousness of Self, or self-consciousness, becomes durational memory is immediately involved i.e. the relating together of "Self-then" and "Self-now", however brief the interval. And, as we have seen, when I remember "self then", I do not have a "remembered intuition", which is impossible, as one of the terms of the required relationship, but a term which is "what was an intuition then" and which is now -- a memorially qualified idea.

170. We might put this by saying that the Person is a construct of ideas and the relations between ideas, and it is constituted by what the Self, known only "now", excretes from the "now" into the mode of duration. And from this we can see that there is one respect at least in which Locke's

account of "Self or Personal Identity" is consonant with what, in the Introduction to this Study, we called the "constructional view".

On the other hand, it is obvious from what has been said about the Self, and our acquaintance with it, that Locke's account is equally consonant with what, in the Introduction, we called the "Pure Ego" theory. And from this we might properly conclude, that, once again, the merit of Locke's account is that it does not err by exclusion and partiality, over-emphasising to distortion either side of the matter, since both accounts, however hard to reconcile, are needed for an adequate account of experience. The present exposition is intended to shew that they are not, from Locke's point of view when it is properly interpreted, so irreconcilable as they appear from either of the other views.

171. Since our knowledge of ourselves as Selves is non-durational or a-temporal, and cannot be otherwise, we might, if we chose, describe this state of affairs in rather awe-inspiring language by borrowing Spinoza's phraseology and saying that in knowing the Self, as we do know it, we "experience our own eternity" -- provided we are clear, with Spinoza, that "eternity" is not "sempiternity". But it

might be safer, and more in keeping with Locke's own practice, not to attempt to use awe-inspiring language, and to note instead that although the ways of knowing ourselves as Self and as Person, are different ways of knowing, they always occur together -- even if one is durational and the other not. I do not know myself as Self alone, or as Person alone: I know myself always as Self and Person. For, the occasions on which the intuitions of Self occur, are occasions of thinking, or remembering, or reasoning, or doubting, or, in general, of being conscious. And when I am conscious, I am conscious of ideas; ideas present to mind constitute consciousness. And when, being thus conscious, I have ideas, I not only know that I have ideas, but also that "I" have them (see para.89 above). In other words, the intuition of Self does not occur without the occurrence of ideas which are its occasions; but, likewise, when ideas occur in consciousness, they are invariably accompanied by the intuition of Self. So that, even although the intuition of Self is non-durational -- and, if we like, eternal in the non-sempiternal sense -- it is, so to speak, "permeating". It is in and through all conscious experience; for all consciousness which is durational involves consciousness of Personal Identity, i.e. of the self as Person. Because, for there to be continuity of consciousness at all,

the ideas which in succession constitute duration, must be linked together, as a succession, by the preceived agreement of their "I"-qualifications, and to have the requisite "I"-qualification they must, as we have seen, include re-presented, minimal constituent ideas of thinking substance (the "opaque" ideas referred to in para.123) which bear the marks of having been the occasion of the intuition of a unique "I", agreeing with present (minimal-constituent) ideas of thinking substance likewise marked. And the durational consciousness, thus achieved, necessarily involves "rememberings" and "discernings", and all of these are accompanied by the intuition of Self.

172. This part of our conclusion would, then, seem to be that the Person is created by excretion of a "timeless" Self into the mode of duration, or time. The Self, in other words, -- and this description must still be cautious and provisional for reasons that we shall shortly see -- creates the Person. And if we paused here to recollect what we have learnt in our history of Philosophy, we might wonder if this were not perhaps a strange conclusion to draw from the writings of a thinker who is so often designated as one who made the "mind" (which is at least connected with the Self,

and as far as most history of philosophy is concerned, is synonymous with it) essentially "passive" - that which was "impressed" from without. And the reflection is not altogether idle, if only because it makes clearer that the description attempted above has been largely in the form of metaphor, which may be misleading. There has been no choice but to use metaphors, because what we are trying to talk about, the Self, is not an idea, and we are compelled to make the attempt to talk about it in a language which is solely adapted for describing an experience constituted only by ideas. And the result of this is that the attempted description, in its form so far, might be mistaken for a mis-description which has already been rejected viz. that the "I" creates itself "I" by "thinking itself I". But this is not so, -- for one thing that formula ignores the distinction made within the "I" (or what is indifferently referred to by that pronoun) as between the Self and the Person. That it is indeed not so, we shall see from a further examination of the phenomena constitutive of the consciousness which is both of Self, and of Person.

173. We have noted that it is occasions of a mind's being conscious that are the occasions of the intuition of Self, an



intuition which, in being made, makes the consciousness of that mind to be a personal consciousness. And, further, any occurrence of "being conscious" involves the consciousness of Personal Identity, if the consciousness is to be continuous -- and it is continuous. In other words, if consciousness extends from time T-1, over time T-2, to time T-3, then the person who is conscious at time T-2 must "remember his being conscious and of what he was conscious at time T-1", and the person (the same person) who is conscious at time T-3 must "remember his having been conscious and what he was conscious of" at times T-1 and -2, or at least, at time T-2, however brief the intervals. This being so, we must observe again what constitutes such consciousness. It is, of course, constituted by ideas, and it is connected together by the relation of ideas; and the connection is effected by the agreement of the qualifications of the ideas. If at time T-2 a subject perceives something, an object, i.e. has ideas of sensation, then those ideas of sensation are accompanied by ideas of reflection, or an idea of reflection, which is the perception of the perceiving; and these ideas of reflection are qualified or marked by the Self or "I" of whose intuition they are the occasion; and the agreement between the qualification or marking of the present idea with the

qualification or marking of the ideas revived "from" time T-1 makes the consciousness continuous. But the point is, that the agreement is between the ideas as qualified, and not between the ideas per se. For example, if in a situation where there are a number of objects present, the subject perceives a triangular object at time T-1, and a square object at time T-2, then his consciousness is continued not by the agreement of the triangular idea and the square idea ( which do not agree) but by the agreement of their qualifications. So that the Self does not create the Person by creating, or even choosing, the ideas which are the constituents of that consciousness which always involves consciousness of Personal Identity, it creates the relations between the ideas -- however derived -- by making them agree, or making them agreeable, through being "its" ideas i.e. by making them carry its specific mark. We should, then, amend our metaphor and say that its "creation" is in some respects at least "involuntary". Whatever ideas occur, the Self marks them as "its" ideas. But whether or not the Self has any control over what the Person shall "consist of", i.e. what ideas shall be included in the consciousness which constituted Personal Identity, is something we have yet to consider.

And, we must note, if the "I" were really to create itself "I" by "thinking itself I", then it would have to exercise selective control over the ideas which constitute a Personal Identity -- that is to say, over the ideas which constitute all consciousness.

174. The next question we have to consider, then, is what is the source, or what are the various sources, of the ideas which the Self marks and annexes to the Person which is its product and accompaniment, and does it itself have control over them or their sources? We may begin to answer this by noting, once again, that the ideas which constitute all consciousness can be divided broadly into two classes viz. ideas of sensation and ideas of reflection. Now we have noted on at least two occasions before, and in important connections (see paras. 63-64 & 130-131 above), that ideas of sensation are controlled as to the order of their succession by an order outwith themselves viz. the order of "things". Over their order, the mind to which the things are ideally presented has no control. This is true of ideas of sensation as presented (or of things ideally presented), and to a lesser degree of such ideas as re-presented -- in which latter case they are presented at least in before-after sub-series consonant with the original series of their presentation.

On the other hand, as was observed likewise and in the same place, ideas of reflection as presented are not so controlled as to their succession by an order external to them, but are controlled (as presented ideas) by the activity of mind alone -- although as re-presented ideas they are, like ideas of sensation, controlled by being subject to the order of their original occurrence as natural facts. But in the present they are not so controlled.

It seems, therefore, that the ideas which occur in any consciousness are in part pre-determined and in part not so. In other words, the contents of any consciousness are partly subject to voluntary control, located somewhere, and partly not so. And this would appear to be a fair conclusion from our examination of ideas, chiefly in terms of the account in Book II.

If we turn, however, to chapter xiii of Book IV., we shall find that this interpretation viz. that our knowledge is partly necessary and partly voluntary, is indeed consonant with Locke's explicit view, and is verified in his text.

In IV.xiii.1. he writes: "But though a man with his eyes open in the light, cannot but see, yet there be certain objects which he may choose whether he will turn his eyes to; there may be in his reach a book containing pictures and discourses

capable to delight or instruct him which yet he may never have the will to open, never take the pains to look into." and continuing in the succeeding paragraph: "There is also another thing in a man's power, and that is, though he turns his eyes sometimes towards an object, yet he may choose whether he will curiously survey it, and with an intent application endeavour to observe accurately all that is visible in it." And these observations emphasise the voluntary element in perception. If we are awake, our senses must to some degree register those ideas which are present to us, but the amplification and articulation of the content of our perception is variable by the voluntary activity of the subject i.e. by the activity of the Self as agent. To emphasise the other side of the picture, i.e. the involuntary element in ordinary perception, he goes on (ibid): "But yet what he does see, he cannot see otherwise than he does. It depends not on his will to see that black, which appears yellow; nor to persuade himself, that what actually scalds him, feels cold. The earth will not appear painted with flowers, nor the fields covered with verdure, whenever he has a mind to it; in the cold winter he cannot help seeing it white and hoary, if he will look abroad..... All that is voluntary in our knowledge is, the employing or withdrawing of any of our faculties



from this or that sort of objects..... And therefore, as far as men's senses are conversant about external objects, the mind cannot but receive those ideas which are presented by them, and be informed of the existence of things without..... For what a man sees, he cannot but see; and what he perceives, he cannot but know that he perceives." As far, then, as this chapter emphasises the passive reception of some ideas in consciousness, it so far corroborates what we have already concluded from other parts of the "Essay" viz. that the order of ideas of sensation is controlled by the order of existing things and that nothing in or "behind" the receiving consciousness controls that order. And this is the respect, and the only respect, in which there is anything at all accurate in the hoary libel that, for Locke, the mind in consciousness is passive. But if we look again at the last sentence of the quotation, we see that even this degree of inactivity is relative. For if a man perceives he cannot but perceive that he perceives; and this perception of his perceiving is a simple idea of reflection whose object is the perceiving itself. And ideas of reflection are activities of the mind which is conscious. Therefore even in passively receiving the ideas which are dictated by the order of external nature, consciousness is active. But it is not

voluntarily active. It perceives because the ideas of things are, in fact, presented to it, and that automatically provokes the mind to action, but the action is determined. But, on the other hand, even in the situation so described, wherein the mind is provoked to involuntary action by the successions in the external world, there may also be voluntary action i.e. the consciousness may be enlarged by, for one thing, further ideas of reflection whose occurrence is not ordered by the ideas of sensation which are themselves ordered by the order of things, but whose order is due solely to "the activity of mind". That is to say, as in the previous quotation, there may be the "employing or withholding of any of our faculties from this or that sort of objects." For example, by an exercise of will, either in or "behind" the consciousness to which they are present, the ideas of sensation which are uncontrollably present in any moment may be extended and articulated by the intervention of some agency, as in the case of the opening of a book or of a drawer, or any other purposive investigation.

175. But this matter of voluntary extension and re-arrangement of the contents of consciousness by the intervention of an agent, requires further investigation. If our experience

can be modified by the exercise of "will", the question arises, what has the requisite faculty i.e. the Will, and how is it exercised? When Locke speaks here, and at many other places, of a "man" doing this or that e.g. "looking" or "turning his attention" or "having the will to", he is obviously enough not speaking in terms of the distinction between "man" and "person" and "self", nor is he using "man" as the zoological term applied to an organic continuant which may be the organic vesture and concomitant of a Mind or Self or Person... and so on. He is not, in other words, using the term as precisely in this account of the voluntary element in consciousness as he uses it in accounts which are directed to the elucidation of quite other topics. In this case he seems to be using it loosely and in the popular sense, and he is quite entitled to do so in the attempt to produce an intelligible account, not in this case of the "nature of man" itself, but of the nature of some kind of consciousness. He could just as well have used the impersonal "one" or "the subject" or "x", but he does not choose to do so, and the fact that he does not, in no way makes his account unintelligible, unless we are determined to misunderstand him. So, the mere reference to the immediate text does not answer our question: What exercises the voluntary control? by producing

the answer "a man", which, however true in a given context and at one level of generality in description, is, as I say, obviously inadequate for the further requirements of an attempt to relate this account to the other accounts of Self and Person.

176. To enquire further into the nature of the Will and of what exercises it, we must turn back to the massive and complex chapter xxi of II. "Of Power".

In giving a genetic account of how we come by the idea of power in general, Locke observes (II.xxi.1) that in the ordinary way of experience, the "mind" remarks "the alteration of those simple ideas it observes in things without, and (takes) notice how one comes to an end, and ceases to be, and another begins to exist which was not before; (and reflects) also on what passes within itself ..... observing a constant change of its ideas, sometimes by the impression of outward objects on the senses, and sometimes by the determination of its own choice....."

That is to say, certain changes in the ideas constituent of our consciousness are such that we intelligibly describe them to ourselves and to others as being instances of the

exercise of power over one thing (set of ideas) by another thing (set of ideas) e.g. we observe the succession of ideas which is intelligibly and communicably summarised in the formula "Fire melts gold" or "this fire is melting that piece of gold", and would say that the "fire" exercised some power over the "gold". Likewise there are other successions of ideas, this time of reflection, which make us describe them as powers which the mind has to make various sets of ideas to follow each other in the course of various "reflective" and "discursive" processes. Both of these cases are parts of ordinary experience which we recognise as and call instances of the exercise of power; but in the latter case we have, because of the immediacy and vividness of the "feelings of" exertion and direction (which are ideas too), a more positive idea of such power voluntarily exercised. As Locke remarks (II.xxi.4): "I thought it worth while to consider here, by the way, whether the mind doth not receive its idea of active power clearer from reflection on its own operations, than it doth from any external sensation."

177. This idea, or notion, or feeling of power, which occurs in the part of our experience which consists in awareness of our own mental operations, is no other than that



which we generally call experience of "willing". We are, in the ordinary way of things, aware of phenomena of the sort we call "choosing to do", "making decisions", "taking deliberate action" etc.. "This at least" says Locke (II.xxi.5) "I think evident -- That we find in ourselves a power to begin or forbear, continue or end several actions of our minds, and motions of our bodies, barely by a thought or preference of the mind ordering, or as it were commanding, the doing or not doing such a particular action. This power that the mind has thus to order the consideration of any idea, or the forbearing to consider it; or to prefer the motion of any part of the body to its rest, and vice versa, in any particular instance, is that which we call the Will. The actual exercise of that power, by directing any particular action, or its forbearance, is that which we call volition or willing."

This, then, is the sort of faculty or power -- intelligibly enough described -- which can and does alter the contents of a consciousness, by alteration and amplification -- whatever it may be, ultimately, that exercises it. Now, we are engaged on this enquiry into agency for a dual purpose. Firstly, to see how far we can progress in speaking intelligibly about the Self whose real existence is immediately known, and secondly to find out what that is (whether Self or Person

or both) to which moral responsibility is to be attributed -- which was found in the previous section to be problematical. So far, we have found out something at least from Locke about the nature of the "willing" which is the basis of agency. But before we go on to enquire what it is that "wills", we must examine the "willing" a little further. For, although experience, i.e. all consciousness, is constituted by ideas (and ideas are whatever is discriminable in experience), and although we have found an intelligible account of the power which, in a general sense, voluntarily alters some parts at least of the consciousness (leaving, as we saw before, some parts of it necessarily unaltered), we are, in a more particular sense, concerned to examine further those parts of experience which are specifically designated in the quotation as the doing or refraining from "actions" -- since "action" is, according to the common usages we always start from, the medium of agency, of agents, into which we are enquiring.

178. To obtain further illumination on this from Locke, we must go on to the succeeding chapter, xxii of II., "Of Mixed Modes". According to Locke' "actions" are "mixed modes". But since this might appear a cryptic utterance --

as we have not had occasion to refer directly to this part of his account before -- we must pause to note that "mixed modes" (as distinct from "simple" modes, such as that of duration) are "such ... complex ideas we mark by the names obligation, drunkenness, a lie etc..... which ... (consist) ... of several combinations of simple ideas of different kinds .... These mixed modes, being also such combinations of simple ideas as are not looked upon to be characteristical marks of any real beings ..... but scattered and independant ideas put together by the mind ... (and they) are thereby distinguished from the complex ideas of substances. (II.xxii.1)!" Having found, then, which sorts of thing in our experience are to be called Mixed Modes, and having observed from the examples given that they are, as presented, such complexes of ideas as those that constitute what is recognisable as an instance of "being drunk" or of "telling a lie" -- which are indeed what would, in the ordinary use, be taken as involving action, and that of a kind to which moral judgement could be applied -- we can go on to see what Locke has to say about "actions" as mixed modes, more generally. In this connection he writes in II.xxii.10: "It is worth our observing, which of all our simple ideas have been most modified, and had most mixed ideas made out of them, with names given to them. And

those have been these three:- thinking and motion (which are the two ideas which comprehend in them all action) and power, from whence these actions are conceived to flow.... For action being the great business of mankind ... it is no wonder that several modes of thinking and motion should be taken notice of." And in the way of further concrete examples, he provides as follows (ibid): "Let us examine any modes of action e.g. consideration and assent, which are actions of the mind; running and speaking which are actions of the body; revenge and murder, which are actions of both together, and we shall find them but so many collections of simple ideas, which, together, make up the complex ones signified by these names."

And it is, of course, with Mixed Modes of the third kind -- those which are actions of the mind and body together -- that we are concerned in terms of the dual purpose of our enquiry.

179. Now, the fuller explication of the situation, thus summarily described, which we require for our present purpose, is this:-

First of all (and once again), all experience is experience of ideas i.e. all consciousness is constituted by ideas, and by "ideas" in Locke's sense -- that is not only as

"pictures of" or "representations of". In the changing manifold which constitutes our ordinary experience, these ideas are presented either simultaneously within specious presents, or successively, in such ways that they can be divided into classes in terms of their differences, and these classes are most usefully named as "simple" or "complex" ideas (which division concerns their form), and as "ideas of sensation" and "ideas of reflection" (which division concerns their source); and ideas of either of the latter classes may be included, as far as form is concerned, in either of the former classes. Not only so, but ideas from both of the latter classes, "of sensation" and "of reflection", can be included together in the class of "complex" ideas (thereby forming Mixed Modes). These classes of ideas and their possible mutual inclusions (i), together with certain sub-classes of themselves to which attention may be specifically directed by being separately named for some expository purpose, e.g. "ideas of relation", "of substance" etc. (ii), and an intuitive and unique awareness of the real existence of the Self (iii), together with -- to complete the account -- a demonstrative knowledge of the existence of God (iv), and a sensitive knowledge of the existence of other "things", which supervenes upon our having ideas of sensation and which is connected in the



"given-ness" of thing-hood in such ideas (v), in their sum, constitute our experience -- according to Locke's account. These form a series, the lower ideal limit of which is the completely "simple" idea (as the epistemologists "atom") and the lower practical or experiential limit of which is the simple idea as the datum, presented as a set of irreducible concomitants. And the upper limit, ideal and experiential, of this series, is a consciousness of the subject as Self and Person, dependent upon God, and conversant about its natural environment.

Now, among those constituents of consciousness thus most generally schematised, there are sub-classes which in discourse are differently named e.g., those sorts of ideas which constitute what we call "actions", or those sorts which make up what we call "moral experience", and those that are ideas which we call "our own volitions". And of these, the sort we call "actions" are discriminated in consciousness as complexes or patterns of what can simultaneously be discriminated as "simpler" ideas from different sources. So that, if, for example, that which I discriminate as an action of my own, consists of what in discourse I call "breaking open a locked box", there will be present in the consciousness constituting or containing the "action" so named, successions

of ideas of sensation whose sources are both objects outside me -- the box itself, what it rests on etc. -- and my own body providing kinaesthetic sorts of ideas of sensation, and also ideas of reflection which are awareness of my relating together the elements of the situation in my "calculations of how to open" the box, and possibly of my feelings of frustration and impatience with the recalcitrance of the material box, or of my expectations of what I am to find etc.. So that the total action, like Locke's third class in the quotation above, will contain, as does "murder", "actions of mind and body together". And since many of the ideas present are ideas of sensation, I know that my "body" is acting upon "something" (the box), and both of them are objects existing in the world of nature. What we mean by "action", then, is the succession of ideas which shews to us our own bodies affecting and altering other natural bodies -- and these latter, of course, may be other "human" bodies. This sort of succession is, however, different from the succession which occurs when I do what in discourse I call "walking into a box in a state of absent-mindedness and knocking it over and breaking it". In this latter succession of ideas which shews me my body affecting and altering another natural body, there is lacking an element which makes the former succession

specifically different. The difference consists in the fact that in the former series there are contained ideas which are of the sort we designate "my own volitions". This awareness of "willing" is, as we have seen, in general an idea of "power". It is discriminable in the situation as an awareness that if "I" make my body move in a certain way (if "I" alter the succession of certain of the constituent ideas of my consciousness), this will be followed by certain alterations in other of the constituent ideas over which "I" do not seem to exercise the same control -- all this simultaneously with, or shortly followed by, "my" actually moving my body i.e. by an alteration in some of the ideas and, consequently, by a concomitant change in the ideas other than those "of" my body. And this "act of will" issuing in "doing of the action" as described is, as something discriminable in consciousness, so far an idea. The remarking of this concomitant change in two series of ideas seems to be all that we can provide, on the analysis so far, in the way of description of the "doing of an action". But it is not yet a wholly intelligible account. What or which is the "I" that "does", is not sufficiently explained.

180. Now, we have seen that ideas of sensation have a

source which is the world of things, and ideas of reflection have a source which is the activity of mind. We have to locate the source of those ideas which are "acts of will" altering the succession of the ideas constitutive of our experience.

But before we turn to that enquiry proper, we must note further that those Mixed Modes of the first kind described e.g. my "breaking open a locked box", very often have yet further concomitant ideas differentiating them from such other Mixed Modes as my "blundering into a box and breaking it accidentally". And these extra elements are discriminable as ideas of approbations or disapprobation of the kind included in what we normally call our "moral experience" -- which does not mean that our ordinary moral experience is made up only of feelings of approbation and disapprobation; it only means that such familiar ideas are normally so identified. Such ideas as these are normally presented when the object of our consciousness is, or is partly constituted by, a Mixed Mode which is an action. Whether they are always present, as concomitants even of such actions as the accidental breaking of a box, is perhaps more doubtful, and would be a subject for a more specialised phenomenological study. But in certain cases they are vividly present as close accompaniments of some such Mixed Modes at least. -- whether these are



our own actions or actions done by other people; for in both cases these are Mixed Modes, although the constituent elements in the case of an action done by myself are very different from those of an action done by another. If I watch a thief breaking open somebody else's locked box, I may have ideas which are a sort of approbation of the technical skills which he exhibits in doing so, together with other ideas (probably very much vivider), which make up my moral condemnation of his action. Now, this does not pretend to be in any way an adequate account of our moral experience, it is merely a passing but necessary reference to such familiar experience, to remind us that the present enquiry is directed to finding how the "I" who does things, i.e. how the "I" as agent, is to be described, because we want to find out also that to which moral responsibility is to be imputed. We have begun by finding out how those things in experience which manifest the presence of an agent -- at least according to the ordinary way of speaking -- are to be described viz. as the Mixed Modes which are actions of the kind that are accompanied by approval or disapproval of our selves or others; and we are left with the problem of who or what "does" what is done in the manner described above. The questions concerning any discernible rule which the succession of such



ideas of valuation adheres to, and their special content which seems to have as part of it what, for brevity, we can call an "ultra-subjective" reference and authority, and their intimate relationship with the idea of power which is "willing", are all questions to which Locke gives mature and lengthy consideration, particularly in xxi of II., but they do not properly concern us here, since we are concerned merely with an account of the form of those Mixed Modes which are "voluntary actions". These questions are the materials for a cognate but quite independent study of Locke's Moral Philosophy. We might note, too, that an analytical account of such actions, given, as above, in serial form, has a certain appearance of artificiality, which is due to the fact that the intimate "connectedness" and immediacy of the experience of such Mixed Modes is inaccessible to this sort of language, and is accessible, if at all, only to the language of the poet.

181. The question, in the terms we used before, now is: What is the source of these ideas which are "acts of will" which alter our experience by changing the order of the ideas constitutive of our consciousness?

If we revert to the text of Locke's account in xxi of II, we find that he speaks of "this power which the mind has thus to order ..... or to prefer the motion of any part of the body to its rest .... is that which we call the Will." Again in xxi.7. he says: "From the consideration of this power of the mind over the actions of the man, which everyone finds in himself, arise the ideas of liberty and necessity." And as a preface to that passage, remarkably "modern" in tone, in which he warns us against being misled by the "faculty" vocabulary into regarding ourselves as being inhabited by a number of distinct agents each exercising its separate "faculty", he observes that we do often talk of the Will as "the commanding and superior faculty of the Soul." In paragraph 19 of the same chapter he has more of importance to say: "I grant that this or that actual thought may be the occasion of volition, or exercising the power a man has to choose; or the actual choice of the mind, the cause of actual thinking on this or that thing: as the actual singing of such a tune may be the cause of dancing such a dance, and the actual dancing of such a dance the occasion of singing such a tune. But in all these it is not one power that operates on another; but it is the mind that operates, and exerts those powers; it is the man that does the action; it is the agent that has power or is able to do."

Now, these equivalent, and perhaps apparently confused, usages of "man", "mind", and "agent", must give us pause to think. On the face of it, Locke is saying that the Will is a power possessed by the "mind", and that Agency is a function of a "man". But we saw recently (para.174 above) that in the case of "man", Locke's usage is not uniform. Precisely in this matter of agency, we found, his usage of man was obviously not the same as the usage he adopts in considering "man" as an organic continuant or in considering the relation of Man and Person. Here likewise, I think, we must assume that his usages are those of ordinary discourse and are without the precision which his own later accounts give them in the consideration of other aspects of our experience. These passages occur in xxi of II., i.e. they are prior, as far as the succession of parts of the account is concerned, both to the consideration of Identity in xxvii of II., and to the consideration of the intuited Self in Book IV. Consequently, we cannot expect him, in this part, to take account of, and make clear, distinctions he has not yet dealt with. If such an anticipation were to be made the prerequisite of exposition then the exposition could never be started at all. In the ordinary usage, to speak of mind having power, and of a man acting, is perfectly intelligible, and Locke is entitled to

use the terms thus "popularly" for the purpose of giving an intelligible account of the Idea of Power. But when we have read his account in its entirety and reflect upon it, we must be prepared to interpret each part of it in the light of the others. In other words, we must be prepared to interpret his account of what it is for the "mind" to will, and for a "man" to act, in terms of his subsequent (or at least other) accounts of "man" and "mind". The whole present exposition is no more than an attempt so to interpret his account of Personal Identity and the Self in terms of those other accounts of our experience which are relevant -- and this does not consist, as we have repeatedly observed, in pointing out the superficial dissimilarities, which is both very easy and not very profitable.

It will therefore be useful and will obviate a tedious repetition if, in starting to interpret this description of the situations which involves voluntary action, we keep in mind the Summary (given in para.147) of the distinctions between, and inclusions and exclusions in different cases among, "mind", "self", "man", "body" etc..

182. We have to consider, then, a situation described as that in which "a man acts", and does so, and is able to do so,

because of a "power in his mind", which directs the motion of his body. The power of the mind, then, is apparently the ultimate source of action. Now "mind", as we have found, is that intellectual substance which thinks in us in any moment of consciousness; and it is itself active. It can, for example, relate ideas together, and by such activity it creates and makes continuous all consciousness. But the activity it exhibits in relating ideas together, is not a directive activity; for, as we have already seen, the only ideas which it can relate together, and which are presented to it for relation, are those which are marked as the ideas of a particular, intuited Self. Its activity is purely cognitive. It is an activity which consists in perceiving and understanding, and not in doing in the sense of initiating changes in the succession of experience of the sort which shews us changes in the external world brought about by the "action" of our bodies. It appears, then, that "mind" in this sense cannot be the "agent" that Locke talks about. Further to this, we know already that it is a cardinal doctrine of Locke's that whether the mind (intellectual substance) which is in, or underlies, our consciousness at different times, is the same mind, can never be known. If, then, the Will is a power exercised by this sort of "mind", we can never



know that actions have been initiated and completed by the same agent. In other words, if the mind which is the medium of consciousness at time T-1, brings about, by some means, the existence of a Mixed Mode (an action), and is not the same mind as similarly brings about the existence of another such Mixed Mode at time T-2, then the same agent was not responsible for the two actions, the consciousness of both of which is nevertheless contained in one personal consciousness; so that whatever is conscious at time T-2 blames or praises itself for the action done at time T-1 which it did not perform. If, as Locke says is not less than probable, it is the same intellectual substance that, in fact, underlies the successive states of a personal consciousness (even although this cannot be known), then all the difficulties arise once again which we examined in the previous section on Butler's objections. We saw there sufficiently, I think, the inadequacy of the account which tries to assimilate the Agent to unchanging Intellectual Substance. And that Locke, just as much as Butler, regarded Substance as the same throughout its existence, we can see by turning again to II.xxvii.28 where he writes: "Whatever substance begins to exist, must during its existence be necessarily the same." It was, I suspect, an awareness of the consequences for moral identity,

of identifying Substance and Agency that made Locke so wary of equating Self or Person with thinking substance. The agent, then, is not an intellectual substance.

Nor, we may note, is it possible to say that the "man" is the agent in any very exact sense. For a man is an animal organism which is at the most a concomitant of a thinking being. The only way in which a man, as such, can "act", is when his material parts are the cause of changes in their environment, and are so without reference to the consciousness "in" them i.e. when his material parts are the "instrument" (as contrasted with agent) which affects other material bodies e.g. when "he" accidentally knocks something over and breaks it. This can only be "involuntary action" or, more accurately, "instrumentality". And it is not into the source of this that we are now enquiring.

It seems, then, that "man" and "mind" can only be "manners of speaking" about the Agent, which are legitimate in that they are intelligible and succeed in drawing our attention to what is involved in those phenomena of our experience (Mixed Modes) which are actions. I would go on to suggest that it is necessary to use "manners of speaking" about the Agent to whom moral responsibility can be imputed, because the Agent, as I hope to shew, is the Self which we

know by intuition and about which, we have seen, it is difficult to say anything, and which is certainly not amenable (not being an idea) to direct description in language. That neither the "mind" nor the "body" nor the "man" is the moral Agent, is evident; for the first is insufficiently stable (for all we could know), and the latter two are material instruments to whose mere motion in itself (which is their contribution to action) responsibility is not imputed. And this elimination might itself be said to provide a presumption that the Agent is the intuited Self, although, as we shall see, there is further reason to adopt this view.

183. To this suggested identification of the intuited Self with the moral Agent, it might immediately be countered that, so far, we have spoken of the Self rather as something, itself passive, which is the object of the mind's activity. It has been spoken of as "being intuited" on such or such an occasion, or as being the object of some active, but unspecified "I's" cognition. But this is only a matter of grammar -- of the "voice" of verbs and convenient verbal arrangement. We could quite as well have spoken of the Self as "manifesting itself" (active) on such or such occasions, as of its "being intuited" (passive). But quite apart from the consideration of expository device -- which is no less (and no more) misleading in this case than in others -- we can go on to see

how, so far from being completely passive, the Self must be regarded as controlling action.

We can begin by noting that action involves duration. Actions are Mixed Modes whose elements succeed each other, and must do so, because among them is the idea of power (since action is not "action" without volition), and the idea of power essentially involves the change (succession) of ideas -- cp. II.xxi.1. Since, then, action requires duration, we cannot act unless we have continued consciousness. All continued consciousness involves consciousness of Personal Identity, and, indeed, all continued consciousnesses constitute Personal Identities, because the only way in which the mind (in its cognitive activity) can relate ideas together so that they form continued consciousness, is by relating in agreement ideas which are "I"-qualified. This relating in agreement which constitutes continued consciousness which is necessary for there to be action, can only be carried out if the related ideas are so qualified. The ideas are so qualified because the Self which is intuited (or manifests itself) on the occasion of their occurrence "marks" them as "its". Therefore, by qualifying or marking the ideas which constitute s consciousness, the Self at least makes action possible. No Self -- No Action. But this, so far, does not necessarily



make the intuited Self the Agent; it only makes it the necessary pre-condition of agency. But we have to observe further that those parts of the Mixed Modes (actions) which are particular modes of the idea of power, i.e. the volitions involved, are ideas which are derived from the changes in ourselves and the outer world -- cp., again, II.xxi.1 -- and the observation of such changes induces the expectation that, given one set of ideas (those constituting the present stage of the action), something else, different, will follow; so that among the ideas constitutive of any moment which is a stage in the duration of an action, there are included ideas of expected consequences (which will be "imaginative" ideas) and, presumably, of potential alternative consequences which may be desired, and such imagined or expected alternative consequences may include ideas of changes in ourselves such as the initiation of further movements of our bodies e.g. among the imagined or expected consequences may be ideas of the movements required of my body in "prizing the box open with a lever" or, alternatively, of those required in "splitting it open with a hatchet". Now, as the duration of the action progresses, i.e. as the constituent ideas of the Mixed Mode succeed each other (for duration is the succession of ideas), the actualisation of any of the potential and imagined consequences cannot be due to the "activity of mind", which is



cognitive and concerned with the relating and not with the selecting of "I"-qualified ideas, but must, as it seems to me, be regarded as due to the marking of whichever of the potential (and imagined) consequences is to be actualised, by the Self, which thus permits the "mind" to relate the consequence, which is thus actualised, to the preceding ideas (which now become memorial) in one personal consciousness. Choice, therefore, is located in the Self, The Self is the Moral Agent.

184. The final form of our interpretation would, then, appear to be that the Self which we intuit is the Moral Agent, and the Person is the evidence for and against it -- in that the identity of the (Self's) Person is constituted by a consciousness which consists of ideas which the Self excretes (metaphorical) into duration. That is to say, the consciousness which constitutes Personal Identity contains both the actions and the passions of the Self: it contains as potential memorial ideas, all the ideas which have occurred over which the Self has no control e.g. the ideas of sensation which it has received by merely being in some particular place at some particular time, and it contains also in the same way all the ideas constituting the Mixed Modes which are its actions,

over which it has had control and for which it is responsible. This "Person" is the inescapable accompaniment, product, and consequence of the Self's activity in every "now", and the activity in every "now" is that of choice -- even if the choice is of "doing nothing". And this is indeed Locke's explicit view. In II.xxi.24., he writes: "Considering the vast number of voluntary actions that succeed one another every moment that we are awake in the course of our lives, there are but few of them that are thought on or proposed to the will, till the time they are to be done; and in all such actions ..... the mind, in respect of willing, has not a power to act or not to act, wherein consists liberty. The mind in that case has not a power to forbear willing; it cannot avoid some determination concerning them, let the consideration be as short, the thought as quick as it will, it either leaves the man in the state he was before thinking, or it changes it; continues the action or puts an end to it. Whereby it is manifest, that it orders and directs one, in preference to or with neglect of the other, and thereby either the continuation or change becomes unavoidably voluntary." So that the Self, as Moral Agent, is, we should like to say, in a "permanent state of decision"; but as soon as we try to say this, a contradiction becomes apparent. There is,

indeed, a contradiction involved even in saying that the Self is an Agent: for, we have said that duration is, as it were, a climate in which the Self cannot live; yet we also wish to say that the Self is Agent -- and agency requires duration. Once again the contradiction arises and is inescapable because language is adapted only to describe what is durational, and the Self is non-durational (or is, in one sense, eternal). This is not, as we have seen, the sort of contradiction that would have unnerved Locke, but since this is an interpretation as well as an exposition of his views, it may be as well to leave the contradiction less baldly unreconciled, as his responsibility, and to find some formula -- and it is no more than another form of words -- such as the proposition that the Self is the "ground of" all agency, or some such thing.

The Self, then, is neither organism nor consciousness, neither body nor mind; nor is it the sum of them, nor is it a meta-organism of physical organism and consciousness together making some third thing which is not of the nature of either or of their sum. Organism and consciousness are the instruments by which it acts, and the source of the occasions on which it is known. Its existence does not constitute a "problem", for it is immediately known: we may choose to

call it a "mystery", because what it is ultimately, is ineffable. At most we can say it is the Agent; it is that to which moral responsibility is imputed; it is that which is subject to judgement. But the judgement to which it is subject is one founded upon the evidence which is the Person, and is one which can only be made by a judge to whom that Person is accessible -- that is, by the Conscience or by God. Judgement of a Self in terms of human justice is the judgement only of action in so far as that is the motion of an organism, and, as such, it is at the best hazardous and makeshift. And this consequence of Locke's account might well provoke the reflection that in it he gives a startling point to the scriptural admonition "Judge not, that ye be not judged", and the further reflection that, perhaps not surprisingly, the implications of his view receive their most succinct statement in the fourth Chapter of First Corinthians Vv.3-5.

The "problem" was of Personal Identity, of the self as Person. It is suggested here that Locke reduces the problem and gives an intelligible account of the Person.

The Self and the Person "are experienced" together and inseparably. The Self might well be called the Pure Ego, and the Person is certainly a construct of ideas in consciousness,

I am conscious of myself as Self and Person simultaneously. I have a "double-presentation" of it (them), just as I have a double-presentation of Substance, and of the self-identity of anything I discriminate as "one". (Which means that Locke's account, taken in its entirety, is coherent and consistent.)

If we consider again the sort of problem that was raised in the Introduction to this Study e.g. that the cognitive state which is the apprehension of the necessity of the proposition "A is A", contains stages which presuppose the knowing of something (the law of identity) which is only known as the issue of the cognitive state, we can see that this is only a case of the double-presentation of A-as-it-is-now in the manner in which anything "identical with itself" is presented under the curious conditions of experienced duration.

It was suggested, too, in the Introduction, that some way might be found of so enlarging our expression that some of the "problems" of Personal Identity might be avoided. But to invent new and differentiating terms for Self and Person, and new pronouns to refer, as the case might be, to Man or Person, Self or Mind, would be only, I think, to invent new problems. The best recommendation we can obtain from



our study, is that we should remember that the grammatical subjects and objects of reflexive verbs do not have invariable referents, and should try to keep in mind distinctions which the language of ordinary discourse does not shew. For, in this matter of language, which has not been the least of our considerations, Locke himself says, in warning us against the deception of common words, but in defending their use: "It looks like too much affectation wholly to lay them by: and philosophy itself, though it likes not a gaudy dress, yet, when it appears in public, must have so much complacency as to be clothed in the ordinary fashion and language of the country, so far as it can consist with truth and perspicuity." -- and, with care, such words as "I" and "self" still may do so.

Finally, if it is said that this is too extreme an interpretation of Locke's views, and one which is too much at variance with received accounts of British Philosophy and its historical development, then my defence of it would finally rest on the fact that it is one which emphasises what must be clear to any reader of the "Essay" -- whether he makes this sort of interpretation or not -- that for Locke the Identity which was important, was not the mental or organic Identity of a Person, but the moral Identity.

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